THE EXCELLENCE OF ZOROASTRIANISM

BILIMORIA & ALPAIVALA

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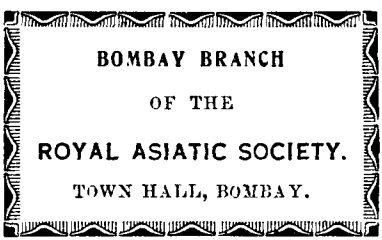

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THE EXCELLENCE

OF

ZOROASTRIANISM:

(The Religion of the Parsis.)

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BY

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AND

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TO

THE LATE

DUSTOOR JAMASPJI MINOCHEHERJI JAMASPASANA,

M.A., Ph.D., D.C.L.

AS A TOKEN OF

GRATITUDE AND RESPECT

FROM

YOUTHS WHO HAVE FOR YEARS ADMIRED

His Loyalty to Truth,

His Singleness of Purpose,

His Chivalrous Courage

AND

His Unchanging Devotion to His Friends.

PREFACE

"Indeed there are few more interesting histories than that which belongs to the development of the Zoroastrian faith among the early inhabitants of Eastern Iran."

This work here submitted to the public, presents for the first time in the English language a collection of select passages, from the best works of eminent non-Zoroastrian writers, relating almost all facts about Zoroastrianism and thereby proving the excellence of the pure faith of Iran. It is now about five years since such a compilation was first contemplated. The present work is made to embrace solely all that relates to Zoroastrianism, though in a few short passages other religions have been mentioned for the mere sake of their comparison (in some particular points) with that of Zoroaster.

This work is meant to contain important ideas about the Avasta, Fire, the Magi, the Sun, the Towers of Silence, Zoroaster and Zoroastrianism. The different authors have been alphabetically arranged with care, in order to enable the reader to refer with facility to any particular author in whose work he may feel interested. The present compilation is a result of deep and patient studies and in putting the same before the public, a sacred duty is deemed to have been performed. Hundreds of works have been written on various subjects relating to the Zoroastrian religion by very learned persons, but it would be injustice to expect ordinary readers to be aware of all facts stated about it. Hence, it

has been thought advisable to present to the public this collection of high ideas of eminent non-Zoroastrians and to prove thereby the superiority which Zoroastrianism enjoys over all other religions of the world.

Since it is the first work of its kind and since it has had the sympathy of many of the learned Parsees of Bombay during the course of its preparation, it is expected to find ready approbation at the hands of the public.

In conclusion, we tender our hearty thanks to Messrs. K. R. Cama, Nanabhai D. Banaji and Ervad Nusservanji B. Desai for the valuable help they rendered us during the compilation of the work.

Bombay, 15th Nov. 1897.

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THE EXCELLENCE OF ZOROASTRIANISM:

THE RELIGION OF THE PARSIS.

THE EXCELLENCE OF ZOROASTRIANISM:

(The Religion of the Parsis.)

A

From the practice of praying before the "sacred flame" in their temples, the Parsis are known as "fire-worshippers," but they do not adore the flame; they simply honour it as the emblem of the Pure and the Bright—Ormuzd.....They base their code of morals on the teachings of Zoroaster. A good conscience, they consider, is the best court of equity, and truth is laid down as the basis of all excellence. Virtue is to be practised, and industry is recommended as a guard to innocence and a bar to temptation. Principles of hospitality, general philanthropy, and benevolence are also strongly inculcated. The mode of disposing of their dead deserves a chapter.—pp. 142–143.

There is nothing of a sacred character ascribed to these obscene but useful birds (the vultures). They are regarded simply as a means of preventing decomposition, and in accomplishing that task they perfectly succeed. The consequence is, that the grounds about the Towers have nothing of the hideous taint of the charnel-house. There is nothing obnoxi-

ous to health ; there is not the finest odour of death to mingle with the perfume of the roses blooming around.—p. 146.

'The Times of India Handbook of Hindustan.' —G. R. Aberigh-Mackay. 1875.

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Many scholars have thought the account was not of Hebrew origin, but was borrowed from the literary traditions of some earlier Oriental nation. Rosenmüller, Von Bohlen, and others, say it bears unmistakable relationship to the Zend Avesta which tells how Ahriman, the old Serpent, beguiled the first pair into sin and misery. These correspondences, and also that between the tree of life and the Zoroastrian plant *hom*, which gives life and will produce the resurrection, are certainly striking.—p. 22.

The name of Zoroaster is connected, either as author or as reviser, with that remarkable system of rites and doctrines which constituted the religion of the ancient Iranians, and which yet finds adherents in the Ghebers of Persia and the Parsees of India.—p. 127.

The charge has repeatedly been urged that the materials of the more recent of the Parsee Scriptures —the Desatir and the Bundehesh—were drawn from Christian and Mohammedan sources. No evidence of

value for sustaining such assertions has been adduced. Under the circumstances, scarcely any motive for such an imposition appears. In view of the whole case, the reverse supposition is rather to be credited. In the first place, we have ample evidence for the existence of the general Zoroastrian system long anterior to the rise of Christianity. The testimony of the classic authors—to say nothing of the known antiquity of the language in which the system is preserved—is demonstrative on this point. Secondly, the striking agreement—in regard to fundamental doctrines, pervading spirit, and ritual forms—between the accounts in the classics and those in the Avesta books, and of both these with the later writings and traditional practice of the Parsees, furnishes powerful presumption that the religion was a connected development, possessing the same essential features from the time of its national establishment. Thirdly, we have unquestionable proofs that, during the period from the Babylonish captivity to the advent of Christ, the Jews borrowed and adapted a great deal from the Persian theology, but no proof that the Persians took anything from the Jewish theology. This is abundantly confessed by such scholars as Gesenius, Rosenmüller, Stuart, Lüke, De Wette, Neander ; and it will hardly be challenged by any one who has investigated the subject: ... ... it is notorious that Mohammed, in forming his religion, made whole-

sale draughts upon previously existing faiths, that their adherents might more readily accept his teachings, finding them largely in unison with their own. It is altogether more likely, aside from historic evidence which we possess, that he drew from the tenets and imagery of the Ghebers, than that they, when subdued by his armies and persecuted by his rule from their native land, introduced new doctrines from the Koran into the ancestral creed which they so reserved that neither exile nor death could make them abjure it. For driven by those fierce proselytes, the victorious Arabs, to the mountains of Kirman and to the Indian coast, they cling with unconquerable tenacity to their religion, still scrupulously practising its rites, proudly mindful of the time when every village, from the shore of the Caspian Sea to the outlet of the Persian Gulf, had its splendid fire-temple,—

"And Iran like a sunflower turned,
Where'er the eye of Mithra burn'd."

We therefore see no reason for believing that important Christian or Mohammedan ideas have been interpolated into the old Zoroastrian religion. The influence has been in the other direction.—pp. 132-133.

Dr. Martin Haug—an acute and learned writer, whose opinion is entitled to great weight, as he is the freshest scholar acquainted with this whole

field in the light of all that others have done, —thinks it certain that Zoroaster lived in a remote antiquity, from fifteen hundred to two thousand years before Christ. He says that Judaism after the exile—and, through Judaism, Christianity afterwards—received an important influence from Zoroastrianism, an influence which, in regard to the doctrine of angels, satan, and the resurrection of the dead, cannot be mistaken.—p. 141.

In regard to the fate of man,—

Such are the parables Zartusht address'd
To Iran's faith, in the ancient Zend Avest.–p.144.

'Doctrine of a future Life.'—William Rounseville Alger. 1866.

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The Religion and History of the Parsis are subjects, which, beyond being interesting in themselves, merit moreover the attention of *savants*, on account of the connection which this people had with the Hebrews, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Indians, and even with the Chinese.—p. 1.

Before reading the works of a Personage so celebrated as Zoroaster, we can only view with pleasure the details regarding his life and legislation; and even considered in this respect, the circumstances, which otherwise appear most immaterial, present to the reader a degree of importance

which renders them interesting ; they excite a sort of curiosity which it is just to satisfy.

The Greeks, Latins and Orientals concur in representing Zoroaster as a genius of the first order, an extraordinary man ; but all of them do not enter into details regarding him.—p. 54.

A young man such as Zoroaster, little concerned about the happiness of this world and the pleasures of his age, could not relish the society of the inhabitants of Urmi, who, for the most part, were given up to magicians. The study of wisdom formed his happiness at the age of 20 or 25. Being within reach of consultation with the Chaldean sages, there was no doubt then that he took lessons from them ; and the sublime learning, which he drew from their writings, was the germ of the truths which he afterwards announced to the whole of Persia.—p. 56.

This Legislator probably passed his youth in contemplating the most sublime truths ; his genius called to his aid all the materials for meditation. Retired to the mountains, he had learnt to despise the riches and conveniences of life. Milk was the only nourishment which he always took, if what has been said since the time of Plutarch be true. A right sense dictated to him the present morality. He saw that sin against nature depopulated the

earth ; that the doctrine regarding the two principles existing by themselves, and that of the two lives, appeared to deprive some of the most atrocious crimes of their proper punishment ; that the intercourse with the magicians multiplied them, supported ignorance and idleness, and rendered arts and agriculture useless, by perpetuating the idea, which the people had, that evil spirits could give the people all which they stood in need of. How to reclaim men, how to check them in their slippery path of passions, if it be not by religion ? At first, Zoroaster collects what his genius suggests to him and all the learning which he had acquired in his travels, such as astronomy, agriculture, natural history, &c. This new knowledge rendered the invocation of the aid of evil spirits useless : men enriched with their own works, and having witnessed the order which reigns in nature, went up easily to their Creator and became more qualified to receive the truths which this Legislator wished to impart to them. ... ...

We ought not then to look on Zoroaster as a mere philosopher, who writes out coldly the system of the universe, and composes a body of doctrines which his shrewd disciples undertake to sustain by arguments. The ancient Legislators have not followed this course.—p. 63.

Of all known religions, that of the Parsis is perhaps the only one in which fasting is neither considered meritorious nor permitted.—p. 76.

Such is then the *precis* of the instructions which Zoroaster gives to the Persians in his works. This Legislator commends, to princes and chiefs, kindness, justice and firmness; to subjects, submission and respect; to priests, purity and learning; to laymen, perfect obedience to the precepts of the religion: and this religion regards, without any distinction, all men whom it ordains to be in peace with one another, to nourish the poor, to take care of the ward, to be as good as one's word, to pay the workman, the doctor and the instructor what is their du, to plough uncultivated lands, to water them, to sink wells, to render the flocks numerous, and to kill noxious animals. We see that all these precepts tend to the good of mankind, and to the special advantage of him who conforms himself to them.—p. 93.

The first point in the theological system of Zoroaster is to recognise and adore the Master of all that is good, the Principle of all righteousness, Ormuzd, according to the form of worship prescribed by him, and with purity of thought, of word, and of action. A purity which is marked and preserved by purity of body, which must always accompany it, and which is found

only in entire submission to the law of Zoroaster. ... ... The second point of the religion of the Parsees consists in detesting the author of all evil, moral and physical, Ahriman–his productions, and his works; and to contribute, as far as in us lies, to exalt the glory of Ormuzd, by enfeebling the tyranny which the Evil Principle exercises over the world which the good Principle has created.

On these two points bear the prayers, the religious practices, the civil usages, and the moral precepts, which are represented in the Zend and Pehlvi books; and these different objects arise, as we shall see, from the theological ideas of the legislator of the Persians.

Prayer is one of the duties most strongly enjoined. ... ... The Parsees commence prayers with a sincere confession of the sins they have committed.

The religion prevalent in Persia till the destruction of the empire, and carried into India by the Parsees, who still possess it, merits more attention than almost any other. It was at first pure theism, though even in the time of Abraham debased by heterodox opinion, but they have ever zealously preserved the doctrine of the unity of God; and we are not to conclude from the veneration they showed, and show, to fire and the sun, that they have ever

adored either the element or the luminary. Zoroaster, their great teacher, directed them to turn towards the sun or the fire when they prayed ; but the prayers which they recite in this position are addressed solely to the Sovereign Being, and not to the symbols of Him.

The doctrines, however, which these miracles (*i.e.* those of Zoroaster) confirmed, were wise and rational. They taught the unity of God; His omnipotence ; His goodness towards men ; a great veneration for fire, the visible type of the invisible divinity; and a great aversion for Ahriman, the evil principle, the instigator of evil thoughts, but not co-eternal with God. The morality contained in the books of Zoroaster is very pure, and all founded on the love of our neighbour.

'Life and religion of Zoroaster.'—Mon. Anquetil du Perron. 1876.

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The observances paid to fire (it is unjust to call them worship) are only parts of a ritual which prescribes a similar respect for, and mention in prayers of, all the classes of animated nature, and some objects inanimate. The respect paid to fire is more prominent than the other parts of the ritual, inasmuch as that element is considered the terrestrial image of the Supreme Being.

'Asiatic Journal.' April, 1840.

The primeval religion of Iran, if we rely on the authorities addressed by *Mohsani Fani*, was that which Newton calls the oldest (and it may be justly called the noblest) of all religions: ... ... A system of devotion so pure and sublime could hardly, among mortals, be of long duration.—p. 58.

'Asiatic Researches.' Vol. II. 1807.

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These (Zoroastrian) Oracles are considered to embody many of the principal features of Chaldæan philosophy. They have come down to us through Greek translations and were held in the greatest esteem throughout antiquity, a sentiment which was shared alike by the early Christian Fathers and the later Platonists. The Doctrines contained therein are attributed to Zoroaster, though to which particular Zoroaster is not known ; historians give notices of as many as six different individuals all bearing that name, which was probably the title of the Prince of the Magi, and a generic term.—p. 3.

Berosus is said to be the first who introduced the writings of the Chaldæans concerning Astronomy and Philosophy among the Greeks, and it is certain that the traditions of Chaldea very largely influenced Greek thought. Taylor considers that some of these mystical utterances are the sources whence the sublime conceptions of Plato were formed, and large

commentaries were written upon them by Porphyry, Iamblychus, Proclus, Pletho and Psellus. That men of such great learning and sagacity should have thought so highly of these Oracles, is a fact which in itself should commend them to our attention.

The term "Oracles" was probably bestowed upon these epigrammatic utterances in order to enforce the idea of their profound and deeply mysterious nature. The Chaldæans, however, had an Oracle, which they venerated as highly as the Greeks did that at Delphi.—pp. 4–5.

It has been believed by many, and not without good reason, that these terse and enigmatic utterances enshrine a profound system of mystical philosophy, but that this system demands for its full discernment a refinement of faculty, involving, as it does, a discrete perception of immaterial essences.

It has been asserted that the Chaldæan Magi preserved their occult learning among their race by continual tradition from Father to Son. Diodorus says: "They learn these things, not after the same fashion as the Greeks: for amongst the Chaldæans, philosophy is delivered by tradition in the family, the son receiving it from his Father, being exempted from all other employment; and thus having their parents for their teachers, they learn all things fully and abundantly, believing more firmly what is communicated to them.—p. 7.

This powerful guild was the guardian of Chaldæan philosophy, which exceeded the bounds of their country, and diffused itself into Persia and Arabia that borders upon it; for which reason the learning of the Chaldæans, Persians and Arabians is comprehended under the general title of Chaldæan.–ftnt. p. 7.

In some respects it is probable that the Oriental mind to-day is not much altered from what it was thousands of years ago, and much that now appears to us curious and phantastic in Eastern traditions, still finds responsive echo in the hearts and minds of a vast portion of mankind. A large number of thinkers and scientists in modern times have advocated tenets which, while not exactly similar, are parallel to ancient Chaldæan conceptions; this is exemplified in the notions that the operation of natural law in the Universe is controlled or operated by conscious and discriminating power which is coordinate with intelligence. It is but one step further to admit that forces are entities, to people the vast spaces of the Universe with the children of phantasy. Thus history repeats itself, and the old and the new alike reflect the multiform truth. ... ...

Like several of the ancient cosmogonies, the principal characteristic of which seems to have been a certain adaptability to introversion, Chaldæan metaphysics synthesize most clearly in the human constitution. —pp. 12–14.

The Oracles urge men to devote themselves to things divine, and not to give way to the promptings of the irrational soul, for, to such as fail herein, it is significantly said, "Thy vessel the beasts of the earth shall inhabit."... ... ...

Of the Chaldæan Magi, it might be truly said that they "among dreams did first discriminate the truthful vision!" for they were certainly endowed with a far reaching perception both mental and spiritual; attentive to images, and fired with mystic fervours, they were something more than mere theorists, but were also practical exemplars of the philosophy they taught. Life on the plains of Chaldæa, with its mild nights and jewelled skies, tended to foster the inferior unfoldment; in early life the disciples of the Magi learnt to resolve the Bonds of proscription and enter the immeasurable region. One Oracle assures us that, "The girders of the Soul, which give her breathing, are easy to be unloosed," and elsewhere we read of the "Melody of the Ether" and of the "Lunar clashings," experiences which testify to the reality of their occult methods. ... ...The Chaldæans, like the Egyptians, appear to have had a highly developed appreciation of colours, an evidence of their psychic susceptibility. The use of bright colours engenders the recognition of subsisting variety and stimulates that perception

of the mind which energizes through imagination, or the operation of images. The Chaldæan method of contemplation appears to have been to identify the self with the object of contemplation; this is of course identical with the process of Indian Yoga, and is an idea which appears replete with suggestion; as it is written, "He assimilates the images to himself, casting them around his own form." But we are told, "all divine natures are incorporeal, but bodies are bound in them for your sakes."—pp. 16–18.

The law of Karma was as much a feature of the Chaldæan philosophy as it is of the Theosophy of to-day; from a passage in *Ficinus*, we read "The soul perpetually runs and passes through all things in a certain space of time; which being performed it is presently compelled to pass back again through all things and unfold a similar web of generation in the World, according to Zoroaster, who thinks that as often as the same causes return, the same effects will in like manner return." ... ...

To Zoroaster also was attributed the utterance "who knows himself knows all things in himself;" while it is elsewhere suggested that "The paternal mind has sowed symbols in the Soul." But such priceless knowledge was possible only to the Theurgists, "Who," we are told, "fall not so as to be ranked with the herd that are in subjection to fate."—pp. 20-21.

They renounced rich attire and the wearing of gold. Their raiment was white upon occasion; their beds the ground, and their food nothing but herbs, cheese, and bread.—ftnt. p. 20.

'The Chaldæan Oracles of Zoroaster.'—Sapere Aude. 1895.

B

The duties owed by the Mazdæean to God were reading of the law, prayer, and sacrifice. The law, emanating from Ahura-Mazda and revealed to Zarathustra, was divine, the source of spiritual and bodily health. By prayer man guarded himself from the attacks and power of the evil principle and his attendant spirits; it was to be offered up at all times and in all places. Prayer was to be made on rising from sleep and on retiring to bed; on eating, sneezing, cutting the hair, and paring the nails; on kindling sticks and lighting a lamp. The sacrifices were bound up with the worship of fire; no sacrifice could be offered without a priest; the sacrificial offerings were flowers, fruits, and the branches and juice of the sacred Hom.—p. 218.

'The Origin and Development of Religious Belief.'—S. Baring-Gould, M.A. Part I. 1871.

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They (the Parsees) centre their fears and their hopes, above all, in Hormazd. Their whole morality

is composed in three words,—Pure thought, word, and deed ; their reward and punishment depends upon their fulfilment of this injunction, and their pardon on the will and mercy of God. ... ... Zoroaster's reform in Bactria occured about the time of Menes, or about 3500 B.C. ... ... Parsee festivals are celebrated with but little show. ... ... A dialogue is composed, which gives a general outline of the doctrines and morality of the Zertusht religion, as believed by the present Parsees. The creed taught in it is summed up as follows:—To know God as one ; to know the prophet, the exalted Zertusht, as his true prophet ; to believe the religion of the Avesta, brought by him from God, as true beyond all manner of doubt ; to believe in the goodness of God ; not to disobey any of the commands of the Mazdiashna religion ; to shun evil and wickedness ; to strive for good deeds; to pray five times in the day ; to believe in the reckoning and justice on the fourth morning after death ; to hope for heaven and to fear hell ; to consider the day of general resurrection and judgment as certain; to remember always that God has done what he willed, and shall do what he wills ; to turn the face towards some luminous object while worshipping God. God is the creator of all things. Deeds shall determine reward or punishment after death, and none but God alone will and can save.

They have sacred fires in the temples, towards which they turn when addressing their prayers, not to it, but to the God of which it is the symbol. The injunction is to turn their face to anything that is glorious, as the sea, the sun, etc.—pp. 146–149.

'The Cyclopædia of India.'—Surgeon-General Edward Balfour. Vol. III. 1885.

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Zoroastrianism, or Parsee faith, teaches that God has provided the soul with every kind of aid to perform successfully the work given it to do. Among the chief aids are knowledge, wisdom, sense, thought, action, free will, religious conscience, practical conscience, a guiding spirit or good genius, and above all, the Revealed Religion.—p. 199.

The Parsee may wear whatever outward dress his circumstances suggest, but under it he must always have the shirt and the thread as symbols full of meaning and serving as perpetual monitors. ... ... The health of the body is considered as the first requisite for the health of the soul, and in all prayer for blessings strength of body has a first place. ... ... A Parsee mother prays that she may have a son who can take part in the councils of their community and in public government. ... ... The Parsee scriptures put women on a level with men, and the great

respect shown to the female sex has played a large part in the unusual elevation of Parsee life and culture. Marriage is highly esteemed. Of three chief forms of benefaction which are enjoined, next to helping the poor is put assistance to a man to marry, and then giving educution to those in search of it. ... ... The Parsee scriptures expressly advise marriage as better for happiness, for physical and mental health, and for virtue and religion, than single life, and to help others to marry is a very meritorious form of charity.—pp. 214–215.

As for the sacred scriptures of the Parsees, the Avesta, it may be said that few remains of antiquity are of much greater interest to the student of history and religion. But these records of the old Iranian faith have suffered sadly by time and the revolutions of the empire. One who has made them a special life-study observes: "As the Parsees are the ruins of a people, so are their sacred books the ruins of a religion. There has been no great belief that ever left such poor and meager monuments of its past splendor."—p. 703.

'The World's Parliament of Religions.'—Rev. John Henry Barrows, D. D. Vol. I. 1893.

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Study that antique record of Zarthustra in the Gathas which all scholars receive as the oldest part of

the zend Avesta; (Marginal note, Sacred Books of the East XXXI., p. 100) does it not rest on a religious experience similar in kind to that of Isaiah? Theologies may be many, yet religion is but one. It was after this truth that the Vedic seers were groping when they looked at the varied worship around them, and cried, "They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, sages name variously him who is but one;" (Marginal note, Rig Veda, I., 164, 46) or again, "The sages in their hymns give many forms to him who is but one."—p. 846.

"This great thinker [Zoroaster] of remote antiquity solved this difficult question philosophically by the supposition of two primeval causes, which, though different, were united, and produced the world of material things, as well as that of the spirit."–p.901.

Zoroaster preached the doctrine, that the one thing needful was to do right. All good thoughts, words and works lead to Paradise. All evil thoughts, words and works to hell.—p. 1111.

'The World's Parliament of Religions.'—Rev. John Henry Barrows, D.D., Vol. II. 1893.

***

The religion of the first Persians consisted of the worship of one God.—p. 129.

'The Ancient World.'—J. A. G. Barton. 1875.

***

They believe in the existence of one supreme God ; the existence of an evil principle ; the immortality of the soul ; the merit of good works.—p. 313.

The Gueber professes to believe in a place of future punishment, and he teaches that good deeds will be rewarded.

'Persia: the Land of the Imams.'—James Bassett. 1886.

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Zoroaster, or Zerdusht, a celebrated Persian, and the founder of the religion of the Parsees, or "fire-worshippers," is supposed to have lived in the reign of Darius Hystaspes. He has been by some called the founder, and by others the reformer, of the Magian religion. He taught that nothing could render men unworthy of the divine favour but vice. Of all virtues, he esteemed philanthropy the most; for which reason he exhorted his followers to acts of benificence. He gave his disciples a form of devotion, which they affirmed was brought from heaven. —p. 1407.

'Beeton's Dictionary of Universal Information.'

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Of course they retain the worship and rites of ancient Persia, including the mystical veneration for fire-light. It is worthy of note that the more intelligent of the Guebres deny that they worship either

the sun or fire, but rather the deity or principle symbolized by those objects.—p. 355.

'Persia and the Persians.'—S. G. W. Benjamin. 1887.

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He came as a teacher at the beginning of this Iranian sub-race, to give them the ancient truths in a form fitted for a civilization that was to grow up amongst them; in a form fitted for the type of mind which was to develop amongst them, suited to train, to evolve, to develop them just as other faiths were given to other peoples with the same object and on similar lines. From that mighty Teacher...whose date runs backward to a time at which every Orientalist would laugh in scorn...from Him came down a line of prophets that superintended the earlier development of the Iranian people. ... ...
As we study this succession of prophets we see that from this ancient religion came what is called the "great science," the "Magic" of the Chaldees. We understand that the Magi of antiquity were teachers and priests of this same ancient faith, and.. if, for a moment, I may startle the modern mind...that when more than 20,000 years ago the Chaldean sage stood on the roof of his observatory and marked and recorded the passage of the stars, that man was one of the comparatively modern descendants of the long line of

the Magi, one of the comparatively modern representatives of the ancient lore of the Zoroastrian faith.

Let us then, go backward and look at the teaching in the light of its earlier form, even although we have only its later recensions so far as scholarship is concerned ; and we shall find that even in its later recensions the ancient truths are recognizable though hidden ; and that though many of these truths have been distorted in the modern form, have been materialized, have been degraded, still the occultist may recognize them ; still he may point them out to those who follow this ancient religion, and may pray the modern Parsis, in the name of their ancient Prophet, the divine Initiate who founded their faith, to rise above the modern materialism, to rise above the too petty limits of modern Orientalism, and to claim their rightful dignity as one of the most ancient of the world's religions. Let them link themselves to the immemorial occult tradition, and not degrade themselves by accepting every passing suggestion of European scholarship.... ... ... Coming to found a civilization which had its own peculiar features, which was essentially agricultural in its character, which was permeated through and through with the idea of the practical side of life, which was intended to train men practically in a noble faith and sublime morality, He did not give a metaphysical philosophy and an exoteric religion,

linking the two to-gether. But He interblended the two so that it is well-nigh impossible to give an account of each separately. A better idea of the whole is obtained by following His method, and by studying the philosophy and the religion as a single system. Having foresight of the special civilization that was to grow up, He gave an immense amount of astronomical science interwoven with the philosophy and the religious teaching, and He gave that astronomical science—so necessary for people engaged in agriculture—in its occult form, and not in its poor dwarfed modern presentation. To Him the stars were not mere masses of matter, revolving by blind unconscious laws around dead unconscious suns. To Him the planets around the sun, and the mighty stars in the highest heavens, were but the bodies of spiritual Intelligences, whose will was their guiding law and whose knowledge ensured the stability of the universe. He taught astronomy not as of dead matter and soulless energy, but as of living Intelligences, moving in changeless order, because guided by perfect wisdom and unswerving will. He taught astronomy as the living occult science of spiritual wisdom, expressed in the material universe, the lowest form of its expression. Out of the teaching of religious philosophy and of science there grew up the ethic which down to the present day is the glory of the Zoroastrian creed. A perfect practical purity

is the key-note of that morality, purity in every action of the personal life, purity in every relation to external nature, honouring external elements as the manifestations of the divine purity, guarding, as it were, their spotless cleanliness as a homage to the Life wherefrom the whole proceeds. ... ... Those wonderful chants of the ancient world, which have their results in the invisible, those chants that control the lower intelligences and that rise up to the higher in the language of colour and of music—these Gâthâs were chanted in that same archaic svara, and though lost by the priests of modern Zoroastrianism, the echoes are still recoverable from the Ákâshic records.—pp.50—56.

These deal with sciences of every kind, with medicine, with astronomy, with agriculture, with botany, with philosophy, with the whole range in fact of sciences and laws.—p. 62.

Passing from that purity of external nature with which a Parsi must not only passively but also actively associate himself, we come to that famous axiom of their religion ; "Pure thoughts, pure words, pure deeds." That is the constantly reiterated rule of the Zoroastrian life—and we notice that the three are placed in the occult order—repeated in his daily prayers, insisted on at every turn.—p.78.

O my Parsi brothers! your Prophet is not dead. He is not perished: He is watching over the religion that He founded, ever seeking to raise it from its present degradation, to give it back its lost knowledge, its lost powers. What nobler work for the Zoroastrian of to-day than to permeate his brethren with the ancient fire, to relight its blaze on the spiritual altar of their hearts? What nobler work than to study his own Scriptures, and to go forth and teach the ancient learning with the authority and power that can only be wielded by a man of the same faith with those he addresses. The fire is not dead; it is only smouldering on its ancient altars; white-hot are the ashes, ready to reburst into flames. And I dream of a day when the breath of the great prophet Zarathushtra shall sweep again through his temples, fanning the ashes on the altars of those ancient fanes, and every altar shall flash into fire and again from heaven the answering flames shall fall, making the Iranian religion once more what it ought to be, a beacon light for the souls of men, one of the greatest religions of the world.—p. 82.

'Four Great Religions.'—Annie Besant. 1897.

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The priests of this (Zoroastrian) religion were the Magi or "wise men" of the Old and New Testaments, located in "the East" among the Chal-

dæans and Persians, and viewed by the Israelites chiefly as astrologers, diviners, and interpreters of dreams. ... ... We read that the prophet and his associates were reckoned "ten times wiser than all the magicians and astrologers." How deeply this view of them impressed itself, we see in the fact that from their Greek name "magoi" is derived our generic term for all professors of enchantment and preternatural powers. ... ... Both Plato and Xenophon, ... speak of the magi with respect. Philo, the great Alexandrian philosopher describes them as men who gave themselves to the worship of nature, and the contemplation of the Divine perfections, and as being worthy to be the counsellors of kings. ... ... It requires very cogent proof to upset the unanimous voice of classical antiquity, which speaks of Zoroaster as a real person and the founder of the Persian religion. ... ... It is less marvellous to believe in these sentiments (Avesta) as having proceeded from a man who was the founder of a religion than to believe they were invented long afterwards in the successful days of the religion when it was beginning to decay.—pp. 247–249.

As regards conduct in this world, Zoroaster enforces the doctrine that no one can occupy a position of indifference; he must be either on the side of good or of evil. The only proper course was to

choose the good, and to follow it in thought, word, and deed. This was announced clearly in the first Gatha; and we must concede to Zoroaster the great merit of seeing the importance of the thoughts, and teaching evil to that source. When we remember how few of the hymns of the Rig-veda refer to sin or its expiation, and how slight are the traces of feelings of guilt, and the necessity for obtaining forgiveness for it from the Deity, it will be seen that the Avesta contains distinctly an advanced teaching.—pp. 252–253.

Many hold that this view of the resurrection was original in Zoroastrianism, and that it was adopted from the Persians by the Jews.—p. 264.

It is much more natural to regard all this as a sign of great antiquity, especially when coupled with the primitive type of the Avesta language and it is not safe to dismiss portions of the narrative as purely mythical because all trace of some of the names mentioned has vanished. Herodotus's statement that the Medes were anciently called Aryans, supports this view of the antiquity of the record which deals solely with Aryans, before the Medes had become a distinct people.—p. 266.

Throughout all we see the guiding principle that purity, especially of the body, is of prime importance. —p. 268.

It is to be noted that the Avesta contains no mention of temples; and the sacred fire was kept upon altars in the open air on elevated places, at most surrounded by a simple wall. No image or representation of the gods or genii was made; fire alone was sufficient to symbolise them, kept up perpetually in great stone or copper basins, fed with the choicest wood. ... ... There can be little doubt that the Avesta anciently consisted of many more books than we have at present. ... ... Alexander the Great, in a drunken frolic, burnt the palace at Persepolis, which contained one of the two then existing complete copies of these books. —pp. 272-274.

May we not say that they (Parsees) have largely preserved a pure faith in one supreme beneficent God, Ormuzd, and believe them when they repudiate the designation fire-worshippers, and reject idolatry in all forms? Fire they revere, fire is the symbol of their god, and they do not treat fire lightly in any circumstances; indeed, they are the only people who universally refrain from tobacco smoking, as offending their religious principles. But they are equally fixed in the determination not to defile any of the works of Ormuzd, whether earth, water, animals, or plants; and their practices of cleanliness and frequent personal ablution must have contributed greatly to their maintenance in health. ... ... All

evil and wickedness are strictly forbidden. Morality is confined within three words, pure-thought, pure-word, pure-deed; truth is particularly enjoined.—pp. 278-279.

Thus, in the midst of antagonistic creeds, persists the religion associated with the name of Zoroaster, a standing revelation to us of the ideas and worship of long-distant ages. Reverence and worship for the great Ormuzd, the supreme Being, principally typified by the wondrous fire, dread of the evil spirit and anxiety to avoid the evils he can bring, and practical charity chiefly characterise this most interesting survival from the past.—p. 286.

'The Great Indian Religions.'—G. T. Bettany, M.A., B.Sc., 1892.

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Professor Rask supposes, with great probability, that the Zend was the popular language, at least of a great part of Iran, and not merely a sacred dialect introduced for religious purposes. The testimony of so ancient an author as Masudi, that the books called Asta (Avesta), and its commentary, the Pazend, were in existence in his time, establishes the comparative antiquity of the Zend Avesta and that the language of it is not a forgery of modern times.

Dr. Bird. 1844.

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Fire is the most perfect and unadulterated reflection, in Heaven as on Earth, of the One Flame. It

is Life and Death, the origin and end of every material thing. It is divine Substance. Thus not only the Fire-Worshipper, the Parsi, but even the wandering savage tribes of America, which proclaim themselves "born of fire," show more science in their creeds, and truth in their superstitions, than all the speculations of modern physics and learning.—p. 148.

The Sun is Matter, and the Sun is Spirit. Our ancestors, "Heathen," like their modern successors the Parsis, were, and are, wise enough in their generation to see in the symbol of Divinity, and at the same time to sense within, concealed by the physical symbol, the bright God of Spiritual and Terrestrial Light.—p. 520.

'The Secret Doctrine.'—Mad. H. P. Blavatsky. Vol I. 1893.

The Esoteric Teaching states that the pole had passed from the equator, and that the "Land of Bliss" of the Fourth Race, its inheritance from the Third, had now become the region of desolation and woe. This alone ought to be an incontrovertible proof of the great antiquity of the Zoroastrian Scriptures.—p. 372.

The translation of Mazdean literature has afforded Roman Catholic writers the pretext for proving their point in the same direction once more. They have taken advantage of the dual nature of Ahura Mazda and of his Amshaspands in the Zend Avesta

and the Vendidad, to emphasize still further their wild theories. Satan is the plagiarist and the copyist by anticipation of the religion which came ages later.—p. 499.

Some expressions are translated to show what subtle Theologians and Casuists mean by the term Ferouer, a word borrowed by some French writers from the Zend Avesta, as said, and utilized in Roman Catholicism for a purpose Zoroaster was very far from anticipating.—504.

'The Secret Doctrine.'—Mad. H. P. Blavatsky. Vol. II. 1893.

Pârsis are to this day charged with Heliolatry, and yet in the Chaldæan Oracles, under the "Magical and Philosophical Precepts of Zoroaster" one finds the following:

Direct not thy mind to the vast measures of the earth;
For the plant of truth is not upon ground.
Nor measure the measures of the sun, collecting rules,
For he is carried by the eternal will of the Father, not for your sake.
Dismiss the impetuous course of the moon; for she runs always by work of necessity.
The progression of the stars was not generated for your sake.

... ... The Magians are accused of all kinds of superstition, but this is what the same Chaldæan Oracle says:

The wide aerial flight of birds is not true,
Nor the dissections of the entrails of Victims; they are all mere toys,

The basis of mercenary fraud; flee from these
If you would open the sacred paradise of piety,
Where virtue, wisdom, and equity are assembled.

... ... The sublime profundity of the Magian precepts being beyond the reach of modern materialistic thought, the Chaldæan Philosophers are accused of Sabæanism and Sun-worship, which was the religion only of the uneducated masses.—p.35.

If behind the physical luminary there were no mystery that people sensed instinctively, why should every nation, from the primitive peoples down to the Pârsis of to-day, have turned towards the Sun during prayers? The Solar Trinity is not Mazdean, but is universal, and is as old as man.—p. 213.

Socrates saluted the rising sun as does a true Pârsi or Zoroastrian in our own day. —p. 279.

'The Secret Doctrine.'—Mad. H. P. Blavatsky. Vol. III. 1897.

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Thanks to the vultures, the bones are laid bare in less than an hour, and, in two or three weeks, the tropical sun scorches them into such a state of fragility, that the slightest breath of wind is enough to reduce them to powder and to carry them down into the pit. No smell is left behind, no source of plagues and epidemics. I do not know that this way may not be preferable to cremation, which leaves in

the air about the Ghât a faint but disagreeable odour. —p. 28.

'From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan.' —Mad. H. P. Blavatsky. 1892.

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The three magi, also denominated kings, that are said to have made gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh to the infant Jesus, were fire-worshippers ike the rest, and astrologers ; for they saw his star. The high priest of the Parsis, at Surat, is called Mobed ; others derived the word from Megh, Meh-ab signifying something grand and noble.—p. xxxiv.

Mazdeans, from (Ahuro) Mazda. (See Spiegel's Yasna, XL.) They were the ancient Persian nobles who worshipped Ormazd, and rejecting images, inspired the Jews with the same horror for every concrete representation of the Deity. "They seem in Herodotus's time to have been superseded by the Magian religionists. The Parsis and Ghebers (... ... Geberim, mighty men, of Genesis VI. and X., 8) appear to be Magian religionists.—p. xxxvi.

'Isis Unveiled.'—Mad. H. P. Blavatsky. Vol. I. 1882.

The Zoroastrian Oracles are full and explicit upon the subject of the Divine Triad.—p. 48.

Max Müller ... ... calls Gushtasp "the mythical pupil of Zoroaster." Mythical, perhaps,

only because the period in which he lived and learned with Zoroaster is too remote to allow our modern science to speculate upon it with any certainty. —p. 141.

The Magus who dethroned Cambyses was a Mede, and Darius proclaims that he put down the Magian rites to establish those of Ormazd. Xanthus of Lydia declares Zoroaster to have been the chief of the Magi! ... ... it was no schism, strictly speaking, but merely a partially-public exposition of strictly monotheistic religious truths, hitherto taught only in the sanctuaries.—pp. 142–143.

The religion of Zarathustra, as he is always called in the Avesta, is one from which the ancient Jews have the most borrowed.—p. 221.

Plato states that the mystic Magian religion, known under the name of *Machagistia*, is the most uncorrupted form of worship in things divine.—p. 306.

'Isis Unveiled.'—Mad. H. P. Blavatsky. Vol. II. 1882.

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Bunsen finds that Zarathustra Spitama lived under the King Vistaspa about 3,000 years B.C., and describes him as "one of the mightiest intellects and one of the greatest men of all time." ... ... Had not Alexander destroyed so many sacred

and precious works of the Mazdeans, truth and philosophy would have been more inclined to agree with history, in bestowing upon that Greek Vandal the title of "the Great."

Zend-Avesta (Pahl.)—The general name for the sacred books of the Parsis, fire or sun worshippers, as they are ignorantly called. So little is understood of the grand doctrines which are still found in the various fragments that compose all that is now left of that collection of religious works, that Zoroastrianism is called indifferently Fire-worship, Mazdaism, or Magism, Dualism, Sun-worship, and what not. —pp. 384–385.

'The Theosophical Glossary.'—Mad. H. P. Blavatsky. 1892.

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Little as we know respecting the more ancient period of the Old Iranians, we know enough to be aware of its importance in the annals of the world, and to be desirous of recovering, as far as possible the records of a race whose influence was once felt throughout the greater part of Asia, who ruled over Egypt, and who were of kindred blood with the races which peopled Europe.—p. ix.

"One of the most evident and best known features of the system whose origin is attributed to Zoroaster, is the place which human personality and human

morality occupy in it. The proportions of this system, as far at least as we have a glimpse of it in the fragments of the Zend books which remain to us, are no doubt less vast than those of Brahmanism, as it appears in the gigantic conceptions of Vedic naturalism. But in detaching itself more decidedly from God and Nature, Zoroastrianism has certainly taken more account of man than Brahmanism, and it may be said that to a certain point it has gained in depth what it has lost in extent. It does not belong to me to point out here what influence a system which tends to develope the noblest instincts of our nature, and which imposes on man as the most important of his duties that of striving constantly against the principle of evil, has exercised on the destinies of the peoples of Asia, among whom it has been adopted at different epochs. It may, however, be said that the character at once martial and religious, which appears with such heroic traits in most of the Yeshts, could not have been without influence on the masculine discipline under which, if we may believe classic antiquity, the monarchy established by Cyrus rose to grandeur."—*Burnouf, Etudes sur la Langue et sur les Textes Zends.*—p. 81.

'Avesta.'—Arthur Henry Bleeck. 1864.

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I and my friends were very much interested by our visit to the Towers of Silence. I don't think that

any objection could possibly be raised on sanitary grounds.

A. Crawley Boevey, C.S.

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Here we see the immutable character of an Asiatic race. The remains of those Persians who ... ... were among the monotheists and iconoclasts of the world, still preserve their abhorrence of Idolatry, and shew it with peculiar force against those Idolatrous symbols which, though they are to be found from the mountains of Thibet to the Appennines, are always peculiarly abhorrent from the moral sentiments of man unperverted and undegraded by superstition.

'Bombay Courier.'—20th August 1808.

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We find it stated that Zoroaster was the only human being who ever laughed on the same day on which he was born. We hear, too, that his brain pulsated so strongly that it repelled the hand when laid upon it, a presage of his future wisdom.—p. 155.

'The Natural History of Pliny.' Vol. II. Translated by the late **John Bostock, M. D., F.R.S.,** and **H. T. Riley, B. A. 1855.**

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The spiritual philosophy of the early occupants of Iran, and the peculiar characteristics of that philo-

sophy and of its founder, have not unsuccessfully engaged the attention of the learned.—p. 1.

'The Parsis, or Modern Zerdusthians.'—Henry George Briggs. 1852.

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Guebres, Guebers, Gaurs, or Gavres (i. e., "giaous," or infidel), terms used in the East to designate the Fire-worshippers, a very ancient religious sect in Persia, who derive their origin from the immediate followers of Zoroaster.—VOL. XI. p. 79.

Magi, the caste of hereditary priests under the Medes and Persians. ... ... They were in exclusive possession of scientific knowledge; and so celebrated were they in astrology and enchantment, that their name was given to all other kinds of enchanters and magicians. ... ... Zoroaster reformed the religious doctrines and ceremonies of the Magi. The best source of information for the study of the character and religion of the eastern Magi is to be found among the works of Anquetil du Perron, who brought to Europe the celebrated books called the Zendavesta.—VOL. XIII. p. 810.

The ancient religion of Persia was the worship of Hormazd, the good principle, or God. Fire, and especially the sun, being considered the fittest emblem of the deity, was the visible medium selected to receive

adoration, but that this emblem was itself worshipped, is a vulgar error.—VOL. XVII. p. 428.

'The Encyclopædia Britannica.' 1857.

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It was an elaborate system, to explain which would require space beyond that at our disposal. ... ... In its main features it was reformed and restored by Zoroaster—whose "Zendavesta" is one of the most ancient books in the Persian language and who seems to have lived about five or six hundred years before the Christian era.—p. 247.

'The Peoples of the World.' Robert Brown, M. A., Ph. D., F. L. S., F. R. G. S.

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Abraham and Zoroaster issue forth, about five thousand years ago, from a dark chaos of middle Asiatic life; the former as Prophet of the Spirit in Western Asia, the latter as witness of the moral consciousness of God in Eastern Asia. They both stand in the midst of a great and ancient civilization, and move in a wonderfully propelling activity of the tribes and people of that part of the world.

'Gott in der Geschichte.'—Bunsen. 1858.

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Here it was that Zoroaster, the great reformer of the Aryan faith, promulgated his doctrine, the

leading principles of which have been transmitted to us by the 'Avesta,' that is, 'the living Word,' or, as others translate it, 'the original text.' This original text formed the written law, which may have been interpreted, even from the earliest times, by an oral or verbal translation which was called 'Zend,' and was in course of time committed to writing. Thus another, or second law, a Deuteronomy, was added to 'the original text' of 'the Holy Word.' And the compendiums of the written and the oral law were combined under the title of 'Avesta-Zend,' or 'Zend-Avesta.' At First, the written law, the Avesta, and then the oral law, the 'Zend', would be regarded as most important; and thus the change from Avesta-Zend to Zend-Avesta might be explained. It has been shown that the ancient 'Yasna,' or 'sacrifice,' probably formed originally a separate book, called 'the Holy Word'; it is several times referred to as authoritative Scripture in the Younger Yasna, the Visparat and the Vendidad, which books form the most ancient part of the Avesta as transmitted to us. According to the opinion of all interpreters of the Avesta, the Yasna contains writings of Zoroaster himself, who had received Divine Revelations, for which reason the Yasna is the only part of the Avesta which claims to be Divinely inspired. Zoroaster, or rather Zarathustra Spitama, a 'messenger' of God, who listens to the voice of the

Spirit, lived under the reign of the Bactrian king Vistaspa, who was the sixth king whose name is mentioned by historical tradition. ... ...

Another proof of the high antiquity which must be assigned to the age of Zoroaster is derived from the circumstance that he is stated in the Avesta to have been born in the aboriginal home of the Aryans. ... ... Although Zoroaster was probably born in Bactria, yet 'the celebrated one of Airyana vaêjô, the son of Pourushâspa, was by tradition thus connected with Haedinesh or Heden, 'the land of charm,' where a 'paradise,' that is, a fenced garden or park, was in primordial times laid out by Divine command, and probably was situated near the sources of the Oxus and Yaxartes. ... ... the first man with whom God spoke, and who obeyed his voice, was Zoroaster, who is called 'the beautiful,' and 'the pure-born,' whom God commanded to 'spread' over God's, worlds and to make them 'fruitful.' This seems to refer to the historical fact that in the time of Zoroaster the ancestors of the Indo-Germanic races, the Aryans, began to spread over God's world. The earliest migration took place in prehistorical times, under King Jemshid, and the account of this exodus, prefixed to one of the most ancient books of the Avesta, the Vendidad, must have been preserved by oral tradition for a long time before it was committed to writing.—pp. 2–5.

Zoroaster summoned a monster-meeting of all the Aryan tribes, and standing before the sacred fire, he addressed his countrymen in a metrical speech, which has been preserved to us, and the chief tendency of which is 'to induce his countrymen to leave the worship of the devas, or gods–that is, polytheism—to bow only before Ahura-Mazda (the living Wise One), and to separate themselves entirely from the idolaters.' This was the cardinal point of Zoroaster's reform. But the prophet of the living God was also 'the prophet of agriculture and civilization.' A true perception of the duties of man towards God must lead to the one performance of man's duties towards his neighbour. Among these stands foremost the cultivatiou of the soil, as the most efficatious means of checking the influences of wicked men and evil spirits.—p. 7.

We ..... purpose giving a brief summary of the principal tenets, which, according to the most ancient books of the Avesta, have been undoubtedly preached by the great Aryan Reformer. These extracts will, it is hoped, point to the source of that Aryan and Chaldæan tradition, of which we shall show that it caused the great reform of the Jewish faith about the time of the Babylonian captivity.—p. 13.

No atoning sacrifices were known to the reformed or monotheistic Aryans. A doctrine of atonement by

blood could never have been harmonised with the spiritual principles revealed to Zoroaster.

Purity in thoughts, words, and deeds being only attainable through obedience to the Divine Spirit in man, which is a gift of God, the creature must commune with the Creator; he must pray to 'the Father' in heaven. This doctrine is to be found in the most ancient parts of the Avesta. Zoroaster, the celebrated one of Airyana-Vaëjo, is praised for having been the first to recite the prayer called Ahuna-Vairja, which prayer is called 'the spreading one,' inasmuch as it was recited by the increasingly numerous adherents of the Aryan reformer ... ... These were, according to the Avesta, the leading principles of the doctrine promulgated by the great reformer of the Aryan faith, who was, as we try to establish, the forerunner of Abraham. ... ... we may assert that the Persian king, Cyrus, or Koresh, the 'Kurush' mentioned in cuneiform inscriptions, adhered to the monotheism originally proclaimed by Zoroaster. Thus only can it be explained that the great unknown Hebrew prophet of the captivity, whose writings are appended to those of Isaiah, calls Cyrus 'the Anointed' or Christ of the Lord; the 'shepherd,' who carries out the Divine decrees; the eagle called from the East; the man appointed by the Lords' counsel, who is strengthened by the Lord to subdue the

'nations,' or Gentiles. The Hebrew prophet evidently regarded him not only as a chosen vessel in the hand of God, but as an especial organ of the Divine Spirit from above, as one of the more perfect Divine incarnations of the Spirit, Wisdom or Word of God, which was in the beginning with God. ... ...
It is a very remarkable fact, that the books of the Avesta, or at least those parts of the same which are attributed to the great reformer and forerunner of Abraham, are by Clement of Alexandria designated as 'apocryphal books,' and for this reason, because they were the exponents of 'a hidden doctrine.' In the outset, therefore, the possibility must be admitted that the Aryan apocrypha are the primary source of the Jewish apocrypha. Be this as it may, it follows, even from those writings of the Israelites which form part of the Hebrew or Palestinian canon, that during and after the Babylonian captivity the all-important doctrine of the Divine Sonship had begun to form an essential part of the national Hebrew faith. Moreover, in the apocryphal writings of the pre-Christian era, which formed part of the Alexandrian canon, and which we are now about to consider, the doctrine about the Divine Spirit, Wisdom or Word of God, as the first-born among all creatures, as the mediator between God and man, as the organ of sanctification and immortality, is developed in general accordance with the principles of

the Avesta. These circumstances lead us to enquire whether the national religion of the chosen people did not undergo an important reform during the Babylonian captivity.—pp. 27–30.

It would be easy to see in 'the tree of knowledge' a hidden reference to a secret doctrine, the full promulgation of which was forbidden. The semitic writer would know that the forbidden or apocryphal knowledge or gnosis of the Israelities had received its earliest expression, if not its origin, in 'the secret doctrine' contained in 'the writings of Zoroaster,' which are for this reason called apocryphal or hidden books by Clemen of Alexandria.—p. 79.

The account in Genesis about Adam and Eve refers, therefore, to a spiritual regeneration of mankind. God clothed man with His glory, spirit, wisdom, or word; that is, by breathing into him the fulness of His power. He created him to his own image, and thus man became a living soul. That the Aryan reformer whom we call Zoroaster was the means of sowing the seed of this regenerating word, is evident from the extracts we have adduced from the most ancient parts of 'the original text' called the Avesta. ... ... 'The first man' with whom God conversed was not Zoroaster, but this reformer of the Ind-o-Germanic ancestors was the first who obeyed the voice of God, and proclaimed the law revealed to him.—pp. 90-91.

Of this apocryphal doctrine it suffices to say that though not actually taught by the Zendavesta, the principles contained in this book on the Divine Spirit, though which God has given to man 'life and immortality,' would necessarily lead the reformed Jew in Babylon to remodel the doctrine of righteousness, in accordance with this more perfect knowledge.—p. 95.

We are now in a position to assert that the principles of apocryphal or secret tradition were essentially the same in Palestine and in Egypt and that the Jewish Targum, or the Hidden Wisdom among the Jews, has many points in common with the Aryan tradition, known to us through the Zend-Avesta.—p. 117.

The national faith of the Hebrews underwent an important reform during the Babylonian captivity. —p. 137.

'The Hidden Wisdom of Christ.' Ernest De Bunsen. Vol. 1. 1865.

We have seen that this doctrine was in its principal points fully developed during the last pre-Christian centuries in the apocryphal Scriptures, which were the earliest records of the originally verbal tradition of the Jews, the origin of which may perhaps be traced through the Chaldæans to Zoroaster, the messenger of the Divine Spirit among the Aryans of Central Asia, at a time which in the

biblical record is referred to as the time of Adam. —p. 88.

We regard the era of creation as the starting point of Semitic tradition, dating from the spiritual regeneration of man, which commenced, or was supposed to have commenced, 5,810 years ago. If we have succeeded in proving that the account in Genesis about Adam, Cain, and Abel, must be figuratively interpreted, and that it refers to the time of the great Aryan reformer, then we have ascertained at what time Zoroaster was born, or was, about the time of the return from the captivity, supposed to have been born Zoroaster lived, at a time from which we are at present removed by 5,670 years. ... ... The time when Zoroaster may have lived cannot be determined. The dates given by Pliny, Aristotle and others, go back to more than 6,000 years before our era. His time fell in the reign of the Bactrian king, Vistaspa. Now, of the last Bactrian king, Oxathres, we know that he was subjugated by Ninus about the year 1230 B.C. But long before Ninus, in the year 2234 B. C., a median dynasty ruled in Babylon whose first king bore the name of Zoroaster. This important fact has been transmitted to us through the Armenian translation of Eusebius, who, together with Josephus, Syncellus and others, made extracts from the Greek work on Chaldæan history by the priest Berosus of Babylon. This historian lived in the time

of Alexander the Great, and is said to have derived his information principally from the ancient archives of the temple in Babylon. The name of the great Aryan reformer was, therefore, known centuries before the time when, about the year 2023 or 2078, Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees. If, then, Zoroaster can be proved to have been the forerunner of Abraham, then Ur may already, in the time of the latter, have been one of the principal seats of Aryan science, and our proposition gains in force, that the Hebrew and the Aryan traditions are derived from the same source, that the Adam of the Bible is the Zoroaster of history —pp. 458-459.

The doctrine of the spiritual or prophetical power, the prophet's name and office, and the organisation of the prophetical order, all these point to Aryan sources. It was during the Babylonian captivity that the Israelites, as a people came into contact with the purer principles of the Aryan faith, of which Cyrus, according to the Behistun inscription, had been the propagator.—pp. 484-485.

'The Hidden Wisdom of Christ.'—Ernest De Bunsen. Vol. II. 1865.

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It is the general opinion, that the founder of the Magian religion was one Zoroaster, who lived about the year of the world 2,900, and it continued to be

the established religion of the country for many years after. They kept up continual fires in their temples and standing before these fires with mitres on their heads, they daily repeated a great number of prayers. ... ... Their great reputation induced people to visit them from all parts of the known world, to be instructed by them in the principles of philosophy and mythology; and we are assured, that the great Pythagoras studied many years under them. ... ... The chief priest of the Magi was called Archimagus, or worshipper of fire; but, in latter times, the kings of Persia assumed that dignity to themselves: but there was an inferior order of priests called narbards, who were obliged to have very long beards; their caps were round; falling over their ears; and they had a girdle with four tassels, to remind them of four established maxims. First, that there is but one God; secondly, that they were to believe all the articles of the magian religion; thirdly, that Zoroaster was God's true and faithful apostle; and, lastly, that they must never be weary of well-doing, as the only thing that could promote their honour in time, and their happiness in eternity.

While they washed themselves, or sat at meals, they observed the most strict silence, no person being permitted to speak a word, and this probably gave rise to some of the sentiments taught by Pytha-

goras to his scholars, that they were to be silent in school, and always to adore fire.—p. 418.

'Religious Ceremonies and Customs.'—William Burder, B. A. 1841.

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Since the secret doctrine dates from the captivity of Babylon, and did not spring from an inward and spontaneous impulse of judaism, it only remains to be seen now whether there existed such a doctrine in the Persian community; and this the orientalists of the present century have enabled us to do by placing in our hands the sacred books of Persia which were in use at the time of the great Darius, of Cyrus, and their predecessors. These texts, of which a popular Greek translation existed more than two centuries before Jesus Christ, are known to everybody as the *Zend-Avesta*, and are attributed to Zoroaster, the ancient legislator of the Aryans of central Asia. In it is to be found the entire doctrine of the secret, in almost the same terms as those used by St. John. There is no possible doubt but that from thence it was transferred to the Hebrews; for at the time of Nebuchadnezzar, the prophet Daniel, though a Jew, already receives the title of *Rab-mag* (Master of Magi), and occupies the first place among the priests of the Aryan religion. Why however did this national religion only produce a hidden doctrine and a mysterious sect among the Jews? For the reason that

this people's entire religious constitution, political and civil, emanated from Moses, a religion which could not admit of a foreign one without destroying itself. Hence after the captivity, the sectarians lived apart from the Israelite community, until the time of Jesus, who gave, by His life and His death, an irresistible impulse to their ideas. Then were those ideas propounded by the mouth of St. Paul among the Greeks and Romans, and were by the pen of St. John and his translators, drawn up into a code for the new community.

The Zend-Avesta contains the whole metaphysical doctrine of the Christians: the unity of God, the living God, the Spirit, the Word, the Mediator, the Son begotten by the Father, principle of life in the body and sanctification of the soul. It contains the theory of the fall and the redemption through grace, the initial co-existence of the infinite spirit with God, a sketch of the theory of the incarnation, a theory which India had so amply developed, the doctrine of the revelation, of the faith of the good and bad angels known by the name of *amschaspands* and of *darvands*, of disobedience to the Divine Word residing in us, and the need of salvation. Finally, the religion of the *Avesta* excludes every bloody expiatory sacrifice; which religion, having once been adopted by the Israelites, did away with the slaying of the paschal lamb and

replaced it by an ideal victim. The course was followed first by the Essenes and Therapeutics, and subsequently by the Christians. The above statement rests on facts whose authenticity cannot be doubted, therefore let us sum them up. At the time of the Babylonian captivity the Persian religion, whose dogmas are contained in the *Avesta*, engendered among the Jews a secret sect, whose doctrine, transmitted by oral tradition, manifested itself, however incompletely, from time to time. The sect appeared in the second century before Jesus Christ, known as the Essenes, and in Egypt soon after as the Therapeutics, a body of religious men who lived together in convents. The doctrine first appears in the Ecclesiasticus of Jesus son of Sirach, in the Book of Wisdom, and in the alterations of the Bible made by Greek translators and called the Septuagint. Both sect and doctrine had greatly unfolded under the Ptolemics, when the contention between Hillel and Shammai brought them to the fore in the first century before our era. The secret doctrine, partially altered and reduced, had found its way into the books of the Hellenic Jew Philon, who lived in Alexandria at the time of Jesus. And this doctrine Jesus secretly imparted to his disciples, especially to Peter, James, and John, bidding them keep it in reserve for better times, while He, by His preaching, would prepare men's hearts for it. The apostles were keeping it

secret in Jerusalem, after the manner of the Essenes of bygone times, when Paul, who was acquainted with it, took upon himself the mission of spreading it among the Gentiles, or rather principally among the Greeks and Romans. This doctrine, which St. Luke collected, only gained a footing in Rome after the destruction of Jerusalem and after the deaths of Peter and Paul. The ignorance however in which the early Christians had been kept gave rise to dissentient and detrimental opinions; some (the Ebionites) denying the divinity of Christ, others (the Marcionites) disputing His humanity. But the Church was firmly established, the moment was propitious for the publication of the secret; and so, in the middle of the second century, the Gospel according to St. Luke was conferred on the believers, written in their native tongues. The mystery had been kept for seven hundred years, a space of time which prepared the western peoples for the new principles of their faith, Asia's legacy.—pp. 73—76.

The former (the Persian religion) throve for a long period on its own principles, without undergoing from its contact with non-Aryan peoples any important change; therefore its original forms should now be sought in the books attributed to Zoroaster. The *Boundehesh* and the Book of Kings (*Schah-nameh*) of Firdouci, which bear posterior dates already offer abundant legend and even beliefs, whose origin is not

by any means Aryan, and which came from Assyria or Chaldæa, or from more southern countries. Before the substance of the *Avesta* was translated and expounded by the scholars of our day, the pantheistic disposition of the Persian religion had, as it were, not been noticed; the only striking part had been the outward symbolism of its worship and the dualistic appearances presented by the myth of Ormuzd and Ahriman. Since then the fact has come to light, that latter personage is far from being able to rank with his rival, that his legend does not at any time represent him as eternal, nay, not even as immortal, but that he is destined one day to disappear. As for Ormuzd (Ahura-mazda), science no longer considers him solely in the personal form given him by legend and worship: the study of zend writing has proved that from a far more abstract metaphysical conception does he derive his absolute and universal being, such as he is found to be in all pantheistic systems of the East. It is not owing to its metaphysical basis that Mazdeism found itself in conflict with Brahminism, but certainly owing to its symbolism, being the most conveyable feature to the people's minds; also owing to worships which emanated from and mould themselves upon symbols, and owing to a peculiar tone which worship always causes in civilization.

With regard to the origin of the Medo-Persian race and religion, European science was confronted

with a grave hypothesis, no doubt a probable one, but not demonstrated by any clear, authentic writings, until the appearance on the scene of the Védic hymns. At the time of Darius' and Xerxes' invasions, Greece had already adopted her enemies as her friends. The beautiful allegory will be remembered in which the poet Æschylus in his tragedy of the Persians represents Persia and Greece as two sisters harnessed to the chariot of the Great King. Subsequently the kinship between these two nations consummated itself in Alexandria through the alliance which took place in their doctrines. The introducing of Persian worships and those of Mithra into the Roman empire, seemed to suggest also the existence of a certain affinity between these religions and those of the West. Only in these latter days however has it been possible to follow up the progress of religious ideas belonging to that important portion of the old world. The road to it was opened by the study of Sanskrit; origins were descried by the discovery of the Vèda, helping us to realize in the religion of Zoroaster one of the most noble and original productions of the Áryans' pantheistic spirit.—pp. 90–92.

From this centre there sprang, at two different but not distant periods, perhaps even contemporaneously, the religions of Persia and India. The common origin of these two great religious systems of Asia was brought to light by the exertions of our

modern orientalists and critics. There is not only the most striking analogy between the oldest doctrines and symbols of the *Avesta* and the *Veda*, but in the first mentioned of these sacred works there lingers the memory of the northern origins of Persian Mazdeism. Moreover in it is to be found a collection of writings belonging to different epochs ; and the study of the oldest fragment discloses an almost complete analogy between the religious doctrines contained in it and those contained in the *Veda*. Still there is no reason for believing that the doctrine attributed to Zoroaster originated in the latter book ; we must therefore assume that they both issued from a common source. The *Avesta* gives the name of this source and its geographical position. The hymns of the *Veda* do not mention it, or make doubtful allusions to it ; but the commentaries of the *Veda*, which themselves belong to a remote period, and are written in the Vedic tongue, are more explicit : they marshal before our eyes the Aryan populations of India, coming from the north-east with their creed and their gods. Those same gods are to be found again in Zoroaster's book, and the metaphysical conception which animated those figures is also the same. The common origin of Parsism and Brahminism grows manifestly clear, the deeper science penetrates into recent discoveries. After having arrived

at our present stage of judgment, all doubt on this head vanishes for ever.—p. 111.

De Bunsen has been enabled to show, by highly enlightened comparisons, that the fundamental doctrines of Christianity are none other than the dogmas in the *Zend-Avesta,* transmitted down to St. John and to us by an uninterrupted line of initiated writers.—p. 132.

Now let us admit that Christian dogmas spring from central Asia, and that their plainly recognised formulas are contained in the books of Zoroaster; it remains to be proved whether the doctrine of the Magi presents the oldest known form of the Aryan religion. Orientalists all unanimously aver to the contrary, and rightly. It is a certain fact, that the doctrine of the *Zend-Avesta* sprang from a reform, and that the fact of rebelling placed it in many respects in opposition to the ancient beliefs of the Aryans. All the world admits too, for the monuments are there to prove it, that those ancient beliefs were carried into India by the Aryans of the South-east, and that there they engendered the Brahmin religion. The *Vêda*, which contains them, may possibly not date further back than the oldest part of the *Zend-Avesta*; but it nevertheless represents the ancient beliefs anterior to Zoroaster. To enable us to take into full account the valuable reform brought about by this legislator, we must draw a

parallel between this book and the *Veda*, and note down the new elements which he introduced into the faith of the Aryans. Now if we set up this comparison, not with the entire Vêda, but with its more ancient hymns, it will be seen that the Ormuzd (*Ahura-mazda*) of Zoroaster is nothing else than the Asura of the ancient beliefs. That Asura is the sun, which by its heat and its light engenders life and thought. But the Medo-Persian doctrine has spiritualized this primitive notion; it has substituted an ideal conception for a material object; it made out of sun and fire the early symbol and product of a superior and invisible being, to which it applied the name of Ahura, and that word henceforth meant living or principle of life. On the other hand, it retained nearly all the ancient Aryan gods, but classified into a regular heirarchy, at whose head it placed this Ahura. These deities, angels, or genii bear in the *Zend-Avesta* the name of *ahura*, just as in the *Vêda* the gods are also *asuras*. ... ...

... M. Michel Nicolas has proved, by an exhaustive study of the Apostles' Creed, that that exposition of Christian faith has in the course of its existence been added to and developed, and that the sole formula required by the early Christians was simply this: "I believe in the *Father*, the *Son*, and the Holy Ghost."

De Bunsen has proved that this formula is not Jewish, and that it comes from Zoroaster.–pp. 136-138.

It is by means of the comparative study of symbols, rites, and doctrines that we succeed in finding out the true relations of religions to each other; it is by observation and analysis that we become acquainted with races and their aptitudes; it is by history we discover what was their contact and the influence they exercised, how, at the very time when observation tells us that the Jewish people consist of two distinct races, historical criticism applied to the Bible reveals to us these two races at enmity with each other since the remotest times. The bulk of the Israelite nation was Semitic, and adhered to the worship of Elohim, personified in Abel. The rest, which were always in the minority, were like strangers from Asia, practising the worship of Jehovah. They were probably Aryans; their headquarters were taken up north of Jerusalem, in Galilee. The people of that country again form a striking contrast to those of the south; they resemble Poles. It is they who infused, partly at least, into the worship of the Hebrews, all that there is of symbolism, and into the earlier books of the Bible all there is to be found of a metaphysical nature. To their race generally belonged the prophets, from Melchizedek until the captivity of Babylon; to that race must also be attributed the religious tone, such

as it is, pervading the songs said to be written by David; also the invectives of the prophets against this "hard-hearted" people, whose natural inaptitude for lofty doctrines and perpetual relapses into idolatry roused their indignation. Upon this old stock, now known to have been of Aryan origin, the people who had been at Babylon founded, not only more explicit doctrines, but an entire sacerdotal and political system, borrowed from the Persians of Cyrus and Darius. Recent investigations have placed these things beyond a doubt.

'The Science of Religions.'—Emile Burnouf. 1888.

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A system which tends to develope the noblest instincts of our nature, and which imposes on man as the most important of his duties that of striving contantly against the principle of evil.

Eugene Burnouf.

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To every act of devotion purity of heart is necessary; and to purity of heart Zoroaster supposes purity of body greatly contributes.

'Horae Biblicae.'—Butler.

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And if, as holiest men have deem'd there be
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee,
And sophists madly vain of dubious lore,
How sweet it were in concert to adore
With those who made our mortal labours light,
To hear each voice we fear'd to hear no more
Behold each mighty shade reveal'd to sight,
The Bactrian, Samian sage and all who taught the right.

Byron's 'Childe Harold.'

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The founder of their (the Parsis') religion was Zoroaster. ... ... He teaches a pure and lofty morality, summed up in three precepts of two words each, viz., good thoughts, good words, good deeds, of which the Parsee continually reminds himself by the triple coil of his white girdle, which never leaves him.

The Parsis are often spoken of as "Fire Worshippers," a term which they rightly repudiate with indignation. They are Theists. God, according to the Parsi faith, is the emblem of glory, refulgence, and spiritual life; and therefore the Parsi, when praying, either faces the sun, or stands before fire, as the most fitting symbol of the Deity. ... ... There is no pleasanter sight in Bombay than the groups of pious Zoroastrians praying at sunset along the shores of Back Bay.—pp. 13-14.

'Picturesque India.'—W. S. Caine. 1891.

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Zoroaster cried out for righteousness, and yearned to see in nature symbols of the highest truth.—p.189.

'The Permanent Elements of Religion.— W. Boyd Carpenter, D. D., D. C. L. 1889.

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The great importance attached to fire in the Mazdayasnian religion is well known. It is esteemed to such an extent that the name of 'Fire Worshippers' has been abusively applied to all the followers of this religion. Fire though belonging to the elements, seems to have had also a spiritual and celestial origin.—p. 116.

If the Mazdayasnian writers were fond of psychological distinctions, they were still fonder of ethical problems. ... ... Among all other non-Christian religions, the Mazdayasnian religion can justly boast of having the soundest, the highest and the most reasonable system of ethics.—p. 145.

It is of some consequence, however, to remark that the doctrine of legal defilements among the Eranians rests upon a philosophical basis quite different from that among other ancient people,—the Jews, for example. For the Eranians there was question of something more than ceremonial purity.

The adventures of the soul after death form the favourite subject of the descriptions of the Mazdayasnian literature.—p. 178.

The fact is that the monotheism of the Dinkart is very pure as compared with that of the other Sassanian writings.—p. 24.

Both the Bun-dehesh and the Mainyo-i-Khard give complete systems of Astronomy.—p. 97.

The principle of heredity and the transmission of qualities of the parents on both sides by generation and also the sterility of hybrids were known to the Eranians.—p. 127.

The maxim 'mens sana in corpore sano' has always been one of the favourite sayings of Mazdeism.

We have spoken about the principal virtues and meritorious works which are inculcated in the Pehlevi books. The reader will have certainly formed a very favourable opinion of the level of these Mazdayasnian Ethics. There remain upon this point some notions in which the Eranian mind goes much beyond ours, and even boldly contradicts our principles.—p. 156.

'The Philosophy of the Mazdayasnian Religion under the Sassanides.'—L. C. Casartelli. 1889.

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From the medians, the institution of the magi found its way, under Cyrus, into Persia, and here rose to the very highest importance, while at the same time they now seem to have extended their inner sphere of action. They were not only the 'keepers of the sacred things, the learned of the people, the philosophers and servants of God,' but also diviners and mantics, augurs and astrologers. ... ... They were held in the highest reverence, and no transaction of importance took place without or against their advise.—p. 256.

'Chambers's Encyclopædia.' Vol. VI. 1864.

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The principle of his (Zoroaster's) theology was as pure a Monotheism as ever the followers of the Jehovistic faith were enjoined. He taught the existence of but one deity, the Ahura, who is called Mazdao, the creator of all things. ... ... The principle of his moral philosophy is the triad of Thought, Word, and Deed. ... ... The immortality of souls was taught long before the Semites had adopted this belief. ... ... The ethical code may be summed up in the three words—purity of thought, of word, and of deed: a religion 'that is for all, and not for any particular nation,' as the Zorcastrians say. ... ...

On the influence Parsism has had upon Judaism and its later doctrines ceremonial, and, through it,

upon Christianity and Mohammedanism—which besides drew from it directly—we cannot dwell here at any length. So much, however, may be stated, that the most cursory reading of the sacred Parsee books will shew, in a variety of points, their direct influence upon the three Semitic creeds.

'Chambers's Encyclopædia.' Vol. VII. 1865.

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From what is to be gathered in the documents referred to, it cannot be doubted that Z. (Zoroaster) was a deep and great thinker, far above his contemporaries, and even many of the most enlightened men of subsequent ages. If proof were needed for the high appreciation in which he was held in antiquity, it might be found in the circumstance, that even the Greeks and Romans, not particularly given to overrating foreign learning and wisdom, held him in the very highest estimation as may be seen by their reiterated praises of the wisdom of him whose name they scarcely knew how to pronounce.—p. 360.

'Chambers's Encyclopædia.' Vol. X. 1868.

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As we have already said, the religion of Zoroaster, which is still professed by the Parsis, is essentially monotheistic. ... ... The Zoroastrians are frequently spoken of as being worshippers of Fire and of the Sun, but it seems clear that this is not really part of their religion.

The principles of the Parsi religion, as sketched above, are those which may fairly be deduced from their sacred books, and such as are held by the most enlightened and cultivated members of their community. .. .. Its real superiority to the other religions of India may ... be gathered from its effect on the people who profess it. The Parsis are distinguished from both Hindus and Mahomedans by their general good conduct and their high standard of morality, as well as by their general healthiness.

'Some Distinguished Indian Women.'—Mrs. E. F. Chapman. 1891.

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No other race has passed through such singular vicissitudes of fortune as the Parsees; no other Bible has undergone such frightful havoc and mutilations as the Zend-Avesta. As Prof. Darmesteter has put it, "the Parsees of the present day are the ruins of a once great Race, as the fragments of the Avesta that have come down to us are the ruins of a once great Book."

It is the grandeur of his (Zoroaster's) ideas and the inspiration of his character that are essential.

'Lecture on Zoroastrianism.'—Dr. Nishikanta Chattopadhyaya, Ph. D. 1894.

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Did not the Persian religion, which from the second Isaiah onwards so greatly interested the Jews,

include a belief in retribution after death? For centuries before the period of the Psalter, Iranian religion had had its own independent development, and its doctrine of the 'last things' as you will probably agree, is peculiarly its own. A knowledge of this great religion is necessary to the full equipment of an Old Testament Scholar, and this can only be gained from a study of the Zoroastrian Scriptures. How strange is it that these should have been so long neglected among ourselves? Had it not come into contact with Zoroastrianism Israel would, historically speaking, have struggled in vain to satisfy its greatest religious aspirations.

'The Origin of the Psalter.'—T. K. Cheyne, D.D. 1891.

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I allow myself to express the opinion that funeral obsequies, conducted in accordance with the teachings and precepts of Zoroaster, as they have been explained to me, though peculiar to a comparatively limited number of the inhabitants of this earth, and undoubtedly novel to the stranger from the West, are entirely agreeable to the principles of a pure religion, and may be and are ingeniously and powerfully supported by physiological science and experience.

Lord Randolph S. Churchil, M.P. 6-1-1885.

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Dualism.—It was natural to speak of good spirits as well as bad; and not unreasonable to imagine them at last ranged as two opposing armies under mighty leaders. Ever since men first observed that day is followed by night, and summer succeeded by winter, it has seemed to them that Light and Darkness struggle for the mastery, that Good and Evil contend for the supremacy, on earth and in the heavens. And this impression was confirmed by the occasional obscuration of the sun or the moon in eclipses. So the form which theory and creed took in some nations, especially the Persian, was that the Two Deities, with their adherents, created good and bad things in turns, controlled the universe between them and were opposed to one another as Night and Day ... ... The Jewish Captivity lasted about seventy years, during which time Babylon was conquered by Cyrus the Persian. As many Jews were born and brought up in Babylonia, it was no marvel that some of them should incline to adopt the dualistic explanation of good and evil.

George St. Clair, F.G.S. 1893.

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The great Iranic religion—the faith of Bactrians, and of the Medes and Persians for many centuries—was founded by the ancient Bactrian sage and prophet, Zoroaster or Zarathustra; and its sacred book was

the Zend-Avesta. It was the religion of the Persians until driven out by the intolerance of Mohammedanism in the seventh century after Christ. It now exists in Guzerat and Bombay in the Hindoostan, as the creed of the Parsecs, descendants of Persians who sought refuge there after the Mohammedan conquest of Persia. —p. 248.

The Gâthâs, or rhythmical hymns, are found to be very ancient. ... ... Though nothing is known of the events of his life, Zoroaster, by his essentially moral religion, influenced various Aryan races, over wide regions for many centuries. His religion was in the interest of morality, human freedom, and the progress of mankind. Zoroaster based his law on the eternal distinction between right and wrong. His law was therefore the law of justice, according to which the supreme good consists in truth, duty and right. Zoroaster taught providence, aimed at holiness, and emphasized creation. He maintained that salvation was only wrought out by an eternal battle between good and evil.

In one of the Gâthâs he asserts his wish to bring knowledge to the pure, in the power of Ormazd, to give them happiness ... ... Zoroaster was oppressed with the sight of evil. Spiritual evil—the evil having its origin in a depraved heart and a will turned from goodness—tormented him most. His meditations convinced him that all the woe of the

world had its origin in sin, and that the root of the sin was in the demonic world. He maintained that the principles of good struggle with the principles of evil, rulers of darkness, spirits of wickedness in the supernatural world. Firmly believing that a great conflict was perpetually in progress between the powers of Light and Darkness, he urged all good men to take part in the war, and battle for Ahura-Mazda, (Ormazd), the good God, against Angra-Mainyus (Ahriman), the dark and evil temper. ... ... The Zend-Avesta is a liturgy—a collection of hymns, prayers, invocations and thanksgivings. It contains prayers to numerous deities, the supreme one of whom is Ormazd, the others being only his servants.—pp. 250-252.

Zoroaster's religion was strictly free from idolary. ... ... Man was in duty bound to implicitly obey his creator, the Good Being, Ahura-Mazda, and to battle earnestly against Angra-Mainyus and his evil creatures. He was to be pious, pure, truthful and industrious. He was to acknowledge Ahura-Mazda as the One True God, and to reverence the Amésha-Spentas and the Izeds, or lower angels. ... ... Truth was another duty inculcated earnestly by the Zoroastrian creed. Herodotus tells us that "the Persian youth are taught three things only ; to ride the horse, to draw the bow, and to speak the truth." ... ... Fire, the

great ethereal principle and the most powerful agent, was specially regarded ; and on the Magian fire-altars the sacred flame, usually considered to have been kindled from heaven, was kept constantly burning year in and year out by bands of priests, whose special duty it was to see that the sacred spark was never permitted to die out. It was a capital offence to defile the altar by blowing the fire with one's breath, and it was just as odious to burn a corpse.—pp. 256-258.

Human sacrifices were certainly not in accordance with the spirit of pure Zoroastrianism.

Idolatry is entirely repugnant to the spirit of the Zend-Avesta, and Herodotus says that the Persians knew nothing of images of gods.—p. 479.

'The Unrivaled History of the World'.—Israel Smith Clare. Vol. I.

We are sure that he lived more than three thousand years ago, because his religion was founded before the conquest of Bactria by the Assyrians, which took place about twelve hundred years before Christ. ... ... He was a man of mighty mind ; one not content to worship powers that ruled the darkness and the light, but that seemed to have no sway over the heaving sea of human passion and sorrow. To him was given the message of One Who was Lord of all, and Who was not to Zoroaster a being like unto man.—pp. 158-159.

The thought of evil around him and within him caused Zoroaster to feel heavy at heart, but it did not make him fold his hands in despair. In the Gâthâs or oldest part of the Zend-Avesta, which contains the leading doctrines of Zoroaster, he asks Ormuzd for truth and guidance and desires to know what he shall do. He is told to be pure in thought, word and deed; to be temperate, chaste and truthful; to offer prayer to Ormuzd and the powers that fight with him; to destroy all hurtful things; and to do all that will increase the well-being of mankind. Men were not to cringe before the powers of darkness as slaves crouch before a tyrant, they were to meet them upstanding, and confound them by unending opposition and the power of a holy life.

To such high thoughts, to be sweetened and kept in vigour by pure deeds, did this noble man give utterance, and we may believe that much of truth underlies the sketch which the good Baron Bunsen has drawn of the assembling together of the people at the command of Zoroaster that they might choose between the nature-gods of their fathers and the Lord whom he would have them serve.—pp. 161-162.

The Zoroastrians had neither temples nor idols and the fire was kept burning in an enclosed space, the chief rites of worship being performed before it. ... ... It is untrue to speak of the Parsis as

worshipping fire ; they simply regard it as an emblem of divine power and honour it accordingly. ... ...

Their creed is of the simplest kind ; it is to fear God, to live a life of pure thoughts, pure words, pure deeds, and to die in the hope of a world to come. It is the creed of those who have lived nearest to God and served Him faithfullest in every age, and wherever they dwell who accept it and practise it, they bear witness to that which makes them children of God and brethren of the prophets, among whom Zoroaster was not the least.—pp. 165–167.

It is not easy to over-estimate the importance of the Avesta as a guide to our knowledge of a religion, noblest and purest of the ancient faiths, and the influence of which upon surroundings and subsequent beliefs was marked.—p. 272.

'The Childhood of Religions.'—Edward Clodde, F.R.A.S. 1875.

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Of the five great creeds of Asia–Islam, Buddhism, Brahminism, the Confucian and Zoroastrian systems,—the last, albeit numbering in our time comparatively a mere handful of adherents, has perhaps the strongest of all claims on our interest. ... ... The Parsee or Zoroastrian faith, meets us, as if composed of ideas all familiar to us,—all open, if not to acceptance, yet at least to recognition as normal

products of human speculation on the world such as we find it. Nay, so much is there in this old creed of Persia in harmony with our popular belief to-day, that we inevitably learn to regard it with a sort of hereditary interest, as a step in the pedigree of thought much more direct in our mental ancestry than the actual faith of our Odin-worshipping forefathers according to the flesh. Maimonides says that the Jews "derived all their knowledge of the angels from the Persians at the Captivity," and truly a perusal of the Zend Avesta affords the best explanation of that mass of ideas concerning good and evil spirits, current so long in Christendom, and yet supported by such slender authorization from the canonical writings of either Testament.—pp. 91-92.

The Western race, on the contrary, began in that remote primeval movement, a course wherein the moral part of religion, recognized from the first in its due ascendency, worked its way through millenniums, giving to the creed which embodied it a dignity and power unmatched elsewhere, till it leavened the thought of the mighty Hebrew race, and, through the Hebrew, of Christendom itself. ... ... Should we indeed in a future world be permitted to hold high converse with the great departed, it may chance that in that "Bactrian sage," who lived and taught almost before the dawn of history, we may find the spiritual patriarch to whose lessons we have owed

such a portion of our intellectual inheritance, that we might hardly conceive what human belief would be now had Zoroaster never existed. ... ... To Zoroaster himself, however, must be given the honour of being the true founder of the religion of Ahura Mazda; the prophet who raised a vague Nature-worship into a definite and noble Theism.—pp. 95-97.

The invariable process by which the great prophets and heroes of humanity become wrapped in a halo of supernatural glory, and removed out of the sphere of the manhood they honoured, has not been wanting in the case of Zoroaster. ... ...

The religion which Zoroaster taught was undoubtedly a pure Monotheism. ... ... During the period of the greatness of the first Persian Empire, of which Cyrus is the central figure, the Zoroastrian religion was the universal faith of the nation, and the Jewish captives then learned from it their science of the angelic and demoniac spirits.—pp. 101-102.

No nation deserve better that we should regard their religion with respect, and examine its sacred literature with interest, than the 120,000 Parsees of India,—the remnant of the once imperial race of Cyrus and Darius.—p. 109.

The contents of these books (Zend Avesta), venerable at once from their antiquity and from

the share they have had in perpetuating a religion of high moral excellence, is at first sight somewhat disappointing. If, as Whitney remarks, we were to study the records of primeval thought and culture, to learn religion or philosophy, or to have our hearts touched and swayed by the power of poetic fancies, we should find little in the Zend Avesta to meet our purpose. Such however is not the point of view from which the value of the recovery of these books can be estimated. We go to them to read the early history of the human race ; to trace out the efforts of man to comprehend the universe ; nay, we may rather say, to behold with reverence some of the first rays of the Light which lighted every man that is born into the world, one of the dawning gleams of that eternal revelation "which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." —pp. 117-118.

No images of Him or of any of His ministering spirits have ever been used by Zoroastrians, who treat idolatry as a heinous crime. Nevertheless, the sun and fire are reckoned by them in a peculiar sense His emblems,—a sense defined in one remarkable passage of the Zend Avesta, where Ahura-Mazda is represented as saying, "My light is hidden under all that shines."—p. 120.

The observation has been frequently made that the existence of a peculiarly rich vocabulary touching

a particular subject in any language, is evidence of that subject having held a prominent place in the life of the nation using such language. Judging by this principle, the importance of morals among the Zoroastrians is very evident. In no other tongue have all the different classes of human sins been similarly catalogued and named; nearly every shade of guilt having its peculiar title in the list of offences. ... ... It is impossible to read this remarkable confession (Patit) without being struck by its moral excellence.—pp. 126–127.

In this last passage, as in many others of the Zend Avesta, we find traces of the noble doctrine that individual virtue is not alone the gain of the soul which possesses it, but an addition to the whole power of good in the universe. ... ... That the old Zoroastrian could daily say, "May Ahura-Mazda increase, Broken be the power of Ahrimanes!" is no small evidence how far on the right way his faith had led him.

Beside the personal and social duties inculcated as the service of Ahura-Mazda, the Zoroastrian creed also requires the performance of direct religious duties, of prayer and praise, forming a cultus of no small importance.—pp. 129–131.

The idea of the value of prayer is beautifully set forth in a fragment of the Khordah Avesta. ... ...

This sublime conception of the highest prayer, as the renunciation of all evil, the resolution of all good, in a word, of perfect moral unity with the Holiest Will, is traceable through many portions of the Zend Avesta.—pp. 134–135.

No religion, perhaps, has given an idea of that unseen world so calculated to meet the requirements alike of the moral sense, which demands that eternal justice shall there be done, and of the heart which longs for the final restoration and reconciliation of all God's creatures. For ordinary sins committed in this life, the Zend Avesta, as we have seen, appoints various forms of expiation and penance, and in one remarkable passage (Vendidad, Fargard VIII.) holds out to the believer a promise of universal "justification by faith," even for sins not thus atoneable. —p. 138.

'Studies of Ethical and Social Subjects.'—Frances Power Cobbe. 1865.

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They (the Gâthâs) present truths of the highest moral and spiritual significance, in a form which constantly reminds us of the teaching of the Pentateuch and the Prophets. ... ... They are absolutely irreconciliable with the theory which regards all spiritual and soul-elevating religions as evolved by a natural process from a primitive naturalistic polytheism: they support the view, which

alone supplies a true, rational, and adequate account of the movements of human thought, according to which religious beliefs were first set in motion by communications from God —p. iv.

The fact of the great comparative antiquity of the Gâthâs stands out strongly in the use made of certain portions, not only at later periods, but in the other books of the Avesta.—p. 137.

The forms of devotion which have ever since been regarded as of supreme importance, as inspired in the fullest sense of the word, which were actually personified and addressed as objects of worship in very early times, and by Parsees in India up to the present, recognise Ahura-mazda, and him alone, as the Lord of the universe, creator of all good, source of all light, moral, spiritual, and physical.—p. 144.

Zoroaster is said to have preached, if not a new doctrine, yet a substantially new and pure form of the loftiest and noblest religious belief of Eran.—p. 153.

Doctrines of the highest significance were first learned by Hebrews in contact with Zoroastrians under the Achæmenidæ. From them— ... ... —the Hebrews learned the power of Satan, the spirituality of monotheism, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, the order and character of the celestial heirarchy. ... ... As an example of the extent to which the assumption, not

indeed that Satan is to be identified with Ahriman, but that the Biblical or rather Christian view of the evil principle and person was substantially derived from the Persians, he (Justi) makes this peremptory statement: "As well as monotheism, so also the assumption of an evil principle is a result of speculation, which seeks to explain the existence of evil in the perfect creation of God, and in this case Parseeism certainly does not stand on the relation of dependence, since the Satan of the Bible was first moulded under Persian influences into the shape in which he has passed from the Jewish to the Christian religion." ... ... To Van Rohlen are due ... attempts to explain the most striking doctrines both as regards evil and good spirits in the Bible as results of the intercourse with Persia in the sixth century before Christ.—pp. 167-168.

The resurrection of the body, one of the most striking and characteristic doctrines of Christianity— ... ... that which the apostles from first to last take as the central point in their religious system, the foundation of their hopes, and the attestation to the truth of their teaching, is said confidently, authoritatively, as a fact scarcely open to reasonable doubt, to have been derived from the Zoroastrian religion, as a doctrine inculcated in distinct and positive texts of the Avesta.—pp. 181-182.

'The Origins of Religion and Language.'—F. C. Cook, M. A. 1884.

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Were the sun's rays cut off from the earth for but a few short days, every living thing (plant or animal) would utterly die. It is no wonder, therefore, that respect has been paid to him by the early races of mankind, and by certain religious sects in our own times.—p. 36.

'The Solar System.'—Samuel Cooke, M. A., Assoc. M. Inst. C. E. 1880.

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They (the Aryans) were the first of the Indo-European family to embrace a purely monotheistic faith. Amongst them appeared Zarathustra, or Zoroaster. ... ... Thence sprang the ennobling creed of Ormuzd and Ahriman. Then the Avesta took shape, and there was kindled the fire that, all but extinguished on its parent altars, still lights a subdued but steadfast flame in the rich and comfortable exile of Bombay.—p. 6.

'Persia and the Persian Question.'—Hon. George N. Curzon, M. P. Vol. I. 1892.

***

The genius of the Iranians preferred ethical conceptions and moral ideas to the grosser and more material conceptions of the Indians, who worshipped the elements of nature. Still further refined by Zoroaster, it became the purest of all the early cults. —p. 128.

'Linguistic and Oriental Essays.'—Robert Needham Cust. 1880.

D

A more accurate chronology, even when stated in round numbers, would show that Pythagoras was a century before Confucius, Confucius a century before Gotama, and Zoroaster of a date quite uncertain, but probably older than any of the three.—p. 123.

'Origin and Growth of Religion.'—T. W. Rhys Davids. 1881.

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The old religious customs and ceremonies of the Zoroastrians have in the main been faithfully preserved even to the present day; they are adhered to as strictly as possible, and the smallest change or variation is not permitted without grave reasons. In all such matters the Zoroastrians have been exceedingly conservative.—p. 86.

'The Home and Age of the Avesta.'—Dr. Emil J. von Dillon. 1887.

***

The religion of the first Persians consisted of of the worship of one God.—p. 71.

'Historical Studies and Recreations'—Rai Bahadoor Shoshee Chunder Dutt. Vol. I. 1879.

E

They (the Iranians) are monotheists; they are exiles; they are the children of a sacred law, which is as old as any existing institution of mankind. ... ... The Iranians were the first among Indo-Europeans to lay hold of a purely monotheistic creed. ... ... Its essence has defied time and the malignity of adverse fortune. It has emerged untainted from amidst the ignoble elements thrust upon it; it has, in great measure, outlived the elaborations of ceremony and scruple; it has maintained its individuality uncompromised, though often menaced, by foreign influences. ... ... We hear the voice of a preacher of righteousness exhorting his shepherd-hearers to turn from idols to serve 'Ahura-Mazda,' the all-wise Lord,' the beneficent Creator.—pp. 387-388.

Those who accepted 'Mazdeism' were bidden, above all things, to abandon the nomad and predatory life, fruitful only in crime, to cultivate the 'pious' earth, and to embrace 'purity in thought, word, and deed;' thus becoming 'such as to help the life of the future.' There is no reason to doubt that the voice, audible to us out of the grey foretime, was that of Zoroaster or Zarathustra, the founder of the old Persian religion.—p. 392.

Persian religion might be described as Zoroastrianism, pure and simple.—p. 401.

What we possess of Avestan literature is but as salvage from a wreck. ... ... This encyclopædia of Persian lore was deposited, it is said, in the archives of Persepolis, and perished with the city in the flames lighted by Alexander's drunken frolic. The story has doubtless a kernel of truth in it. ... ... This is the Vendidad, a code of purification and morals of primary importance. ... ... It is a pure monotheism. ... ... Of fire-worship, in an idolatrous sense, the Parsis are altogether innocent.

The accusation is calumny, which can only be repeated through wilful malice or culpable ignorance. ... ... The purified flame burning in their temples is to them a symbol of the Divinity, and an aid to the lifting up of thought.—pp. 406-408.

'The Edinburgh Review or Critical Journal.' 1885.

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Amongst the ancient Persians it (ether, Akas) seems to have been considered even as the principle of vegetative life, hence the Zend-Avesta calls it "un feu qui ne brule pas et qui anime tous les êtres." It was probably after the Persian idea that some Greek philosophers believed the ether was a fire. The Arabs have probably found this theory of the heaven

in the schools of Persia, before they have been acquainted with the writings of the Greeks.—p. 180.

'El—Mas' Udi's Historical Encyclopædia. Vol. I. 1841.

***

That renowned wisdom of the Magi in Persia, Media, and the neighbouring countries, therefore, contained also the secret teachings of philosophy and the sciences, which were only communicated to priests, who were regarded as mediators between God and man, and as such, and on account of their knowledge, were highly respected.—p. 2.

The first magician, who is recorded as such, and who gave distinct teachings on the subject of magic, is Zoroaster.—p. 125.

The belief in the origin of all living things from the eternal fire is one of the most ancient in the East, and has been maintained in the purest form in Persia.—p. 217.

All old teachings of the Chaldæans, Indians, and Egyptians, are very similar to the Dualism of Zoroaster. ... ... The entire system of Oriental Magic is in accordance with the principal doctrines of the Zendavesta.—p. 221.

'The History of Magic.'—Joseph Ennemoser. Vol. I. 1854.

F

You must not say that they (the Persians) were fire-worshippers. They were worshippers of a single God.

'Shah-Nameh.'—Firdusi.

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I swear in the name of God that the person, who is not a follower of Zoroaster, will never see Paradise.

'Shah-Nameh.'—Firdusi.

***

The ancient Persians, were not worshippers of images. Their idols were the natural elements, and in particular fire, as the purest and most characteristic symbol of God.—p. 223.

'The Empires and Cities of Asia.' A. Grucer Forbes. 1873.

***

The Parsees, or Guebres, are a people whom the Mahomedan persecutions drove from Persia, their native country, in the eighth century of the Christian æra. They are descended from the ancient Persians, followers of Zoroaster, to whose religious tenets and moral laws, they still profess to adhere.—p. 78.

Zoroaster, and the ancient magi, whose memories they revere, and whose works they are said to preserve, never taught them to consider the sun as anything more than a creature of the Great Creator of

the universe : they were to revere it as his best and fairest image, and for the numberless blessings it diffuses on the earth ; the sacred flame was intended only as a perpetual monitor to preserve their purity ; of which this element is so expressive a symbol. ... ... The morality of the Zend Avesta is entitled to praise : purity of word, action and thought, is repeatedly inculcated. ... ... The disciple of Zoroaster is enjoined to pardon injuries ; to honour his parents and the king, whose rights are derived from Ormuzd, to respect old age ; to observe General Gentleness of manners and to practise universal benevolence. Fasting and celibacy are forbidden to the men ; and as far as it may depend on themselves, the latter is discouraged in women.—pp. 80-81.

'Oriental Memoirs.'—James Forbes, F.R.S. Vol. I. 1834.

***

If I had been brought up a Parsee, I should have been a devout worshipper of the morning sun, and offered up soul-melting homage to the departing God of day.—p. 875.

'Human Science or Phrenology.'—Prof. O. S. Fowler.

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It contains a metaphysics and a cosmogony closely mixed with a system of ethics, politics, civil legislation and liturgy. ... ... The doctrine which it presents to us was once really professed by one of the vastest and most populous empires which existed on the earth, by a nation who could set on foot more than a million soldiers, and counted more than ten million lives.—pp. 13-14.

It is a very great sin, for a faithful disciple of Mazdeisme to kill, or merely to strike and cause hurt to animals without reason, to refuse them shelter and nourishment according to their wants. ... ... Zoroaster, coupling practice with precept, goes to preach his law among inimical nations, and prays that those who envy and persecute him may open their eyes to light. He shows us the just men on the day of the last judgment weeping over the wicked as much as the wicked weeping over themselves. ... ... Hence it follows that Zoroaster's faith, whilst teaching the most elevated morality, and presenting as the summary of law those three essential rules: "purity of thought, purity of speech, purity of act," remains notwithstanding far removed from mysticism, and especially from asceticism, so dear to the East. Far from recommending fasting and abstinence, it prohibits them as a sin,

because it supposes that, in the struggle which it has to sustain, man has no less need of holiness and of bodily strength than of the energy of soul and the faculties of intelligence. It does not believe that in this world, the soul and body can do away with one another; it styles them "friends," and proposes their union as a model to those which take place amongst men. It exacts from its followers, and promises them all at once, "a living body" in recompense of their fidelity, health, and strength.—pp. 33-35.

The system of Zoroaster is the highest and the most universal expression of the mind of ancient Persia.—p. 55.

'French Views on Zoroastrianism,' translated from the texts of M. Adolphe Franck and M. Jules Oppert. 1868.

* * *

It was in the reign of the great King Gustasp, who flourished in 1300 B. C., that Zoroaster, the prophet of the Parsees, was born, and who subsequently promulgated the tenets of their ancient religion. ... ... Even Herodotus, as early as 484 B. C., said, "The Persians have no images of the gods; no temples nor altars, and consider the use of them a sign of folly. This comes, I think, from their not believing the gods to have the same nature with men." ... ... The

Parsees hold fire to be "the most perfect symbol of the Deity, on account of its purity, brightness, activity, subtility, fecundity and incorruptibility." Several historians, among them Sir John Malcolm, have proved, that the reproachful term of "fire-worshippers" should not be applied to the Parsees.—pp. 123-124.

'Glimpses of India.' J. H. Furneaux. 1895.

G

We are happy to find that the Parsees are coming forward to state contents of their Shastras and the opinions they themselves entertain respecting the doctrines of Zoroaster, and also to correct any mis-statements European writers may have inadvertently or ignorantly made regarding the faith and practice of the Parsee religion, because with the march of enquiry there must be a corresponding diffusion of truth.

'Bombay Gazette.' 10th September 1841.

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His Royal Highness spoke in approbation of the sanitary precautions adopted in this method for the disposal of the dead.

'Bombay Gazette.' 18th November 1875.

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The Hon'ble Mr. and Mrs. Tennyson visited the Parsee Towers of Silence on Friday last, and went inquiring by over the extensive space covered by them. ... ... The visitors expressed themselves particularly struck by the purifying processes adopted in the disposal of the corpses.

'Bombay Gazette.' 18th November 1885.

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SOME OF THE DISTINGUISHED COLD SEASON VISITORS TO THE TOWERS OF SILENCE.

During the past few weeks, there have been many distinguished visitors to the Towers of Silence, among them being the following :—

H. E. Countess of Dufferin.
Marquis and Marchioness of Huntley.
H. E. Lady Reay.
Lady Helen Blackwood.
Duke and Duchess of Manchester.
Lady Alice Montague.
Duke of Tortonia.
Earl of Rosebery.
Lord and Lady Wynford.
Professor Darmesteter.
Mr. M. Ferguson, M.P.

The Earl of Shaftesbury.

Sir Samuel W. Baker.

Mr. Paget Toynbee.

H. R. H. Prince Fredric Leopold of Prussia.

Count Kanitz.

Baron Von Nikisch Rosenegk.

Mr. H. Bartels, Imperial German Consul.

Count Wedel.

Sir Roper Lethbridge.

Sir Andrew Fairbarin.

Mr. Wm. Snodgrass, M.A., M.B.

Colonel C. Larking, Equerry to H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught.

Colonel A. H. Paget, Son of Lord Alfred Paget.

Mr. Herbert Gladstone, M.P.

Mr. Edward Tennant.

... ... They expressed their satisfaction at the clean and decent appearance of the place as well as with the sanitary precautions adopted by the Parsees in disposing of their dead.

'Bombay Gazette.' 24th December 1886.

***

Nowhere do we meet with conceptions which approximate so closely to a pure monotheism, nowhere is the notion of the Deity so free from human adjuncts, nowhere is the purely spiritual part of religion worked out with such exactness and preciseness. If this in itself is sufficient to awaken univer-

sal interest, it must undoubtedly do so far more powerfully when we learn that this religion is not the result of a long unconscious development, but, on the contrary, rather the outcome of conscious speculation. The Avesta religion was founded in Eastern Iran, and its institution is connected with the name of Zarathushtra ... ...

In the place of the vague and irregular nature-worship, there appears a solid, compact, consistent system. The tenor of the new doctrine was essentially moral.—pp. 23-24.

However obvious the similarity between the God of Israel and the God of the Mazdyasna may be, still I reject entirely the assumption that the Avesta people have borrowed from the Jews. Upon the Iranian soil a narrowly-confined nation has, independently and of itself, attained that high conception of God, which, with the exception of the Jews, was never attained by any Arian, Semitic, or Türánian tribe.—p. 32.

The doctrine of Zarathushtra demands a frugal, prudent life.—p. 52.

'Civilization of the Eastern Iranians.'—Dr. Wilhelm Geiger. Vol. I. 1885.

***

Nowhere, I think, does the belief in the future life after death stand out more prominently, nowhere are the ideas respecting it expressed more decidedly

and carried out in all their details more fully, than among the Avesta people.

Piety in thoughts, words and works, was the chief precept of the Zoroastrian religion. In it everything else is included ; it is the sum of all precepts, the doctrine that is always repeated anew, that is, I dare say, met with on every page of the Avesta. He who thinks, speaks and acts well, or as it is said, according to religion, is a perfect worshipper of Mazda (Mazdayasna) and a worthy follower of Zarathushtra. This triple injunction is a summary of the whole ethical life of the Zoroastrian.

I will put forward here only one strophe from the Gâthâs to prove that this doctrine existed already in the oldest period of the Mazdayasnian community.

> The two spirits, that first existed,
> The twins, announced to me in a dream,
> What good was and what evil
> In thoughts, and words, and works.
> Of this the pious choose
> The right, but not the bad ones.

It affords, indeed, proof of a great ethical tendency and of a very sober and profound way of thinking, that the Avesta people, or at least the priests of their religion, arrived at the truth that sins by thought must be ranked with sins by deed, and that, therefore, the actual root and source of everything good or bad must be sought for in the mind. It would not be

easy to find a people that attained, under equal or similar historical conditions, to such a height of ethical knowledge.

'Civilization of the Eastern Iranians.'—Dr. Wilhelm Geiger. Vol. I. 1885.

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Not merely a Kingly, but to a certain extent a divine, origin is ascribed to Zoroaster in an account which we find in Shâhrastâni.—p. 195.

'Civilization of the Eastern Iranians'.—Dr. Wilhelm Geiger. Vol. II. 1886.

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Judeism after the exile—and, through Judeism, Christianity afterwards—received an important influence from Zoroastrianism, an influence which, in regard to the doctrine of angels, Satan and the resurrection of the dead, cannot be mistaken.—p. 286.

'The Journal of the German Oriental Society,' IX.

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The memory of Zoroaster, the ancient prophet and philosopher of the Persians, was still revered in the East. ... ... A short delineation of that celebrated system will be found useful, not only to display the character of the Persian nation, but to illustrate many of their most important trans-

actions, both in peace and war, with the Roman empire.—pp. 197-198.

The most careless observers were struck with the philosophic simplicity of the Persian worship. ... ... Every mode of religion, to make a deep and lasting impression on the human mind, must exercise our obedience by enjoining practices of devotion, for which we can assign no reason; and must acquire our esteem, by inculcating moral duties analogous to the dictates of our own hearts. The religion of Zoroaster was abundantly provided with the former, and possessed a sufficient portion of the latter. At the age of puberty the faithful Persian was invested with a mysterious girdle, the badge of the divine protection; and from that moment all the actions of his life, even the most indifferent or the most necessary, were sanctified by their peculiar prayers, ejaculations, or genuflexions; the omission of which, under any circumstances, was a grievous sin, not inferior in guilt to the violation of the moral duties. The moral duties, however, of justice, mercy, liberality, &c., were in their turn required of the disciple of Zoroaster. ... ... Fasting and celibacy, the common means of purchasing the divine favour, he condemns with abhorrence, as a criminal rejection of the best gifts of providence. The saint, in the Magian religion, is obliged to beget children, to plant useful trees, to destroy noxious animals, to convey water to the dry lands of Persia,

and to work out his salvation by pursuing all the labours of agriculture. We may quote from the Zend Avesta a wise and benevolent maxim : ... ... "He who sows the ground with care and diligence acquires a greater stock of religious merit than he could gain by the repetition of ten thousand prayers."—pp. 200-201.

It is interesting to observe that Gibbon was among those who accepted the Avesta as genuine documents of the Zoroastrian religion. It is unnecessary to say that in the present century their antiquity has been abundantly confirmed.—p. 457.

Edward Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.' Vol. I. 1897.

***

To the customs of this sect (the Parsees) Akber practically inclined more than to any other, his stated times of worship being day-break, noon, and midnight. "His majesty," Abul Fazil adds, "has also a great veneration for fire in general, and for lamps, since they are to be accounted rays of the greater light."—p. 160.

Gladwin's 'Ayeen Akbery,' Vol. I.

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From Zerdusht down to him of Tyana·a, I honour all these great names who endeavour to unite the world by their travels.

Oliver Goldsmith.

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The ancient existence of the zend dialect, first discovered by M. du Perron, being as little subject to be called in question as that of the Pehlvi or Parsee, we therefore consider the Zend Avasta as a genuine religious code of the old Persians, by reference to which we are enabled to judge of their peculiar notions in matters of religion. The conformity in point of language discoverable upon comparing the inscriptions with the manuscripts of the Zend Avasta, proves equally beyond a doubt the ancient existence of the Zend, as the Sassanide inscriptions deciphered by M. du Sacy, prove that the Pehlvi flourished some centuries later.

Grotefend.

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Indeed, there are few more interesting histories than that which belongs to the development of the Zoroastrian faith among the early inhabitants of Eastern Iran.

The Guardian.

H

He (Zoroaster, the founder of the ancient religion of the Persians) considered light as the most perfect symbol of true wisdom and intellectual endowment: and darkness the representative of things hurtful and destructive. From hence he was led to inculcate

an abhorrence of all images, and to teach his followers to worship God only, under the form of fire, considering the brightness, activity, purity, and incorruptibility of that element as bearing the most perfect resemblance to the nature and perfections of the good Deity. For the same reason the Persian showed a particular veneration to the sun which was founded on their belief that it is the noblest creature of the visible world. ... ... He taught that there is one supreme, independent, and self-existent Being.

Hanway's Travels.

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In the measure of her moral sensibility, Persia may be fairly ranked among the brightest spots of ancient heathendom.

'Christ and other Masters.' Rev. Hardwick.

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The Parsis are now strict monotheists, and whatever may have been the views of former philosophical writings, their one supreme deity is Ahura Mazda. Their views of Angra Mainyu seem to differ in no respect from what is supposed to be the orhodox Christian view of the devil.

Haug's Essays. 2nd ed.

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The extensive ancient literature contained in the Nosks was already complete in 400 B. C. It was, of course, the work of centuries, and its beginning may be placed at 1500 B. C.; for, at least, a thousand years must have elapsed before such a various and bulky sacred literature could grow up out of the seeds sown by the great founder of the Persian creed, Zarathustra Spitama.

Martin Haug, Ph. D.

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Still the scanty fragments of his own speeches and sayings left to us suffice to show that he really lived, that his aims and pursuits were the highest to which a mortal can aspire, viz., the temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of mankind, his motives the purest and loftiest, love of truth and virtue. So we must class Zaroaster amongst the greatest men who ever lived and so one of the real benefactors of the human race.—p. 13.

'Origin of the Parsee Religion.' M. Haug, Ph.D.

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To the whole ancient world Zoroaster's lore was best known by the name of the doctrine of the Magi, which denomination was commonly applied to the priests of India, Persia, and Babylonia.—p. 3.

At whatever time he may have lived, he was at all events their prophet, and the master of the Magic rites.—p. 11.

50163

From the ancient classical writers, as well as from the tradition of Persia, we learn that the religious literature of the ancient Persians was of considerable extent, though the Zend-Avesta, in its present state, is a comparatively small book. This circumstance necessarily leads up to the conclusion, that the sacred literature of the Zoroastrians has suffered very heavy losses. Thus Pliny reports on the authority of Hermippos, the Greek philosopher, that Zoroaster composed two millions of verses; and an Arab historian, Abu Jafir Attavari, assures us that Zoroaster's writings covered twelve hundred cowhides (parchments). These reports might appear, at the first glance, to be exaggerations, but for the enormous extent of the sacred books of other Oriental nations, which affords us sufficient reason for believing that the number and extent of the books ascribed to Zoroaster by his followers may have been very considerable.

'The Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion of the Parsis.'—Martin Haug, Ph. D. 1878.

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They (the Persians) have among them neither statues, temples nor altars; the use of which they censure as impious, and a gross violation of reason.—p. 41.

This sect originating in the East, abominating all images, worshipped God only by fire. ... ...

Of this system, Zoroaster was the first founder.—ftnt. p. 163.

'Herodotus.'—Rev. William Belœ. 1834.

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The Magi were wise men, who devoted themselves to the study of nature and religion; they had nothing in common with those importers afterwards termed magicians. The eastern Magi were the first Gentiles who adored the holy child of Mary; which should be sufficient to remove every prejudice that the word magus might create.

'Dissertations on the Prophecies concerning Christ.'—Bishop Horly.

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Among the most remarkable men of the early ages of the world, Zoroaster, in science and knowledge—and Bacon says, "knowledge is power"—must have foremost rank. Porphyrius states that Darius was so proud of having been initiated into the mysteries of the art by Zoroaster himself, that he ordered the fact to be engraven on his tomb. We are also told that Pythagoras derived his system from the Persian Philosopher. ... ... It is some testimony for the simple faith taught by Zoroaster, that after twenty four centuries his followers are most peaceable, most orderly, and most humane among the subject of the British Crown in

India, the truly Masonic Virtues of Charity and beneficence are their constant practice.

Jeremiah Howe. 1862.

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The Persians, from the beginning of their existence as a nation, always believed in only one and the same true and omnipotent God. They believed in all the attributes of the Deity believed by us; and God is called in their writings, the Doer, the Creator, the Governor and the Preserver of the world. ... ... They acknowledged that they sinned daily, but proposed themselves to be penitent for all the sins committed by them either by thought, word, or deed.

Dr. Hyde.

I

The Pársis acknowledge one Omnipresent, All-creative, Omniscient, and Invisible God, but affirm that beholding his works is equilvalent to beholding himself. The corollary of this is that they worship the sun and the elements as the index of Deity. A traveller on arriving in Bombay will soon remark the strings of Pàrsis standing on the sea-shore at dawn worshipping the rising sun.—p. 268.

'Handbook for India': Part II. (Bombay.) 1859.

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The sect of Magians or Guebres (fire worshippers) which, as we have said, divided the religious empire of the East, took its rise in Persia, where, after a while its oral doctrines were reduced to writing by its great prophet and teacher Zororaster, in his volume of the "Zendavesta." The creed, like that of the Sabeans, was originally simple and spiritual, inculcating a belief in one supreme and eternal God, in whom and by whom the universe exists: ... ...

The primitive rites of this religion were extremely simple. The Magians had neither temples, altars, nor religious symbol of any kind, but addressed their prayers and hymns directly to the Deity, in what they conceived to be his residence, the Sun. They reverenced this luminary as being his abode, and as the source of the light and heat of which all the other heavenly bodies were composed; and they kindled fires upon the mountain tops to supply light during its absence.

'Life of Mahomet.'—Washington Irving. 1874.

J

It was said of him (King Akber) that "he mingled the best and purest part of every religion for his own faith." His preference was for the Zoroastrian system.—p. 568.

'Oriental Religions'—Samuel Johnson. 1872.

The Zoroastrian meant by fire whatever was noblest in personal will; and would not allow that it ever destroyed life even when one was burned to death. It must serve life, not destroy it.—p. 25.

Through the whole history of Aryan faith runs also the fire-symbolism of Mithra, ... which could be represented by the sun, and especially the sovereignty of truth and justice; ... ... it is all gathered up into the wonderful Mithra-Yasht of the Avesta, unsurpassed in its symbolic expression of duty, love, and power in the life of man. ... ...

The Iranian Aryan was specially gifted with the sense of immediate relation between ideas and things: his main concern was to bring the body into correlation with the mind. This was the sum of Avestan ethics, "pure mind in pure body." Not mind here, body there; not mind above, body below; neither the one nor the other alone living by its own force, but the one in the other, representing itself by the other. Therefore he thought and lived in symbols of conscious will. Every natural form that could possibly reflect his motive-energy took a typical personality for his imagination. No equal gift of personifying abstract qualities and ideas in visible images, with that displayed in the Avesta, appears in any other Bible of the world.—pp. 26-27.

This most responsive symbol, which stirs and waves and flashes to heaven with the motion of the flame within the soul, is the very tongue of prayer, the very garment of praise ... ... Iran was indeed the true fire-temple of nature, bespread with naphtha springs, meteoric lights, and burning mountains. The mystery of the flame brooded over it and burst from its bosom. To this day the hot winds parch the dry grass till they want but a spark to fan it into flame; and the stars shine through the clear atmosphere with a splendor that seems articulate with spiritual meaning and relation. No religious symbolism could seem more natural or imperative on such a region than that of fire. ... ...

Nothing can be more free from ceremonialism than the older Gâthâs of the Avesta, the earliest literature of the faith. The Persian turned the gods of the West out of doors to confront Nature, and if they could not breathe its fresh air, to die.—p. 34.

Neither an individual, nor a race, nor humanity itself, advances by any other method than that of creating symbols of its own ideal experience in the world of the senses, through the energy of personal will. Of this energy the Iranians were the typical race of the early world, heralds of the will-power which continues to transform nature into the image of humanity. ... ...

... ... Zoroastrianism makes this element the ideal bond of man with the universe. ... ... If a race deserves honor in human annals, in proportion to the emphasis it has given to the radical conflict of principles on which moral progress begins, to the practical energy of its effort to meet and solve the antagonisms of experience, a very high place is due to the Persians of the Avesta. ... ... With the Iranians begins a poetic ardour for self-discipline, a passion for winning ideal virtue by honest payment of the price.—pp. 37-39.

There shall be no asecticism; no self-torture; no self-contempt; no excessive fasting nor violent grief; nothing that can enervate the soul and body by whose toil the world shall be redeemed with the righteousness of man ... ...

Here was a religion that could make heroes, but never a monk. It poured out imprecations on all that caused sickness or death. It erected its altars to medicine, and made healing the noblest art ... ... Profoundest of all antagonisms was that of Life and Death; and in that centred the meaning of work. By his whole nature the Iranian was a reformer of the actual world, by creating whatever belonged to life, and destroying whatever belonged to death. Life was the fire he worshipped; living growth his ideal good. No sin

more deadly than suicide. Never should die the flame of his enthusiasm for consuming all morbific and fatal things, for turning the dead clod into living organism, for sweeping the lines of cultivation farther through drifting sands and wide salt plains and snowy wastes,—like quickening Mithra, life-giving Haoma, and Ormuzd, source of fire.—pp. 63-64. ... ...

All the tragedy, all the poetry, which has gathered the conception of the individual as a boundless possibility of good or evil, not in this life only, but for everlasting existence, has its germ in the religion of Iran. The Jews did not come out of their gloomy and shadowy Sheol till Persia had taught them in the exile this idea of the permanence of individual being ; nor did Christianity add anything to the positiveness of this older faith in a future existence. pp.—66-67. ... ...

To the Mazdean belongs the honor of having clearly and practically conceived, through the moral and religious earnestness of his grasp on the stern conditions of life, that divine work depends on human,—not only on man's hand-work, but the praise and prayer which, while fulfilling the law, assures its growth.—pp. 69-70. ... ...

The Persian was the very apostle of earnest ethical endeavor. ... ... This writer, is candid enough to confess that

the Zoroastrian scriptures gave moral value to the older Chaldeo-Semitic conceptions of the Fall.—p. 90.

Zoroastrianism illustrates the law, that religion ever seeks to make good superior to evil, and in some form or other, logical or otherwise, insists on its ultimate triumph. ... ... First of great religions, it revealed the power of the personal element in the religious ideal; evolving out of man's crude sense of the strife of material nature a conception of spiritual struggle and moral prophecy through the energy of individual will, and incarnating this conception in a personal Word, around whom the great conflict of good and evil gathered so supremely that all coming faiths were destined to draw from the fountains it opened in mankind. ... ... Thus we find in the Avesta each class of objects traced to one beginning,—all waters to one source; all trees to one tree; all animals to the primal Bull; all men to one progenitor (Gayomard). Hence, castes are impossible: the king is parent of all men; the marriage rule is monogamy; the ethical law is responsibility to one personal principle of right.—pp. 96-98.

The Persians of old, prayed for all Persians.–p. 115.

The serious business of self-discipline seems to have haunted the Iranians of the Avesta; and the race, it has been observed, "are free from the wild excesses of imagination, and have a severe and moral aspect."

It is impossible to deny the moral earnestness of a faith whose ceremonial invocations enumerate hosts, of good men. The preservation of their names alone in this form, is the surest evidence of long ages of pious gratitude and honor to the best. That hero-worship, which we have affirmed to be at the root of Iranian mind, has here its perfect illustration. The "Fravashis of the pure" are the earliest type of a religion of humanity, foreshadowing the modern cultus of genius and character. Here begins the religious recognition of human personality.—p. 117.

The main difference between the Vedic and Avestan religions is, that in the latter the Vedic worship of natural powers and phenomena is superseded by a more distinctive and personal interest.—p. 133.

In fact, the substance of this religion, the worship of the personal will, as incarnated in the struggle of good with evil for the mastery of the universe, —was inevitably the nucleus of future religious development. It could not be escaped ; it was indispensable to all existing of forms religious and social aspirations ; and although a flood of physical force swept its special name and organization almost out of being, its soul passed into Mahometanism, Judaism, and Christianity to mould these new accessions to the same essential purpose.

Whatever signs of borrowing from these systems may appear in the Pehlevi literature of Mazdeism are

delusive, so far as this modern religion is concerned. In the vitality of personal and ethical will-worship, Mazdeism was the precursor, the herald, of their glory, and its influence on their development was of the most decisive and enduring character.—p. 154 ...

The Mazdean doctrine of the resurrection of the body is much older than the Jewish.... ... ...

The Mazdean angelology, so far from being borrowed from the Jews, furnished the basis of their seven princes of the angels, and of their celestial legions of guardian spirits; while its demonology gave them their later or malignant Satan and his diabolic legions possessing human bodies and souls.—pp. 156-157.

Their worship of Ormuzd made them watch and work with religious zeal, and obey the laws of purity and health as the first of duties. Their hatred of Ahriman made them wage lifelong warfare against the barrenness and the noxious creatures that constituted his realm.—p. 318.

The nobler elements of the moral ideal,—magnanimity, ardor, devotion to the best,—are equally natural fruits of that "purity in thought, word, and deed," which Zoroaster taught his followers was the meaning of the creative Fire.—p. 320.

'Oriental Religions.' (Persia.)—Samuel Johnson. 1885.

K

But the simple religion of Zoroaster, which was worshipped under the emblem of light and fire, the Author of life and happiness, had not the debasing effects of the intricate idolatry and metaphysics of India; and if Iran fell beneath foreign conquerors, the fault was not in her system of religion.—p. 13.

'Outlines of History.'—Thomas Keightley. 1830.

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The Persians are almost a solitary exception; and that they had neither statues nor altars was probably owing to their religion being a pure worship of the heavenly bodies and the elements, which needed no symbols, as they are not abstractions but sensible realities.—p. 151.

'Primæval History.'—John Kenrick, M.A. 1846.

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It is easy to perceive how much of the Zoroastrian element may have pervaded the Jewish religion at the time of the promulgation of Christianity, when its principal teachers were the Pharisees or "separatists," if, indeed, their doctors did not actually get their appellation from the word *Pharsi*, "Persian" an etymology that has something to recommend it. These doctrines, as then taught, are set forth in the *Kabbala* or "Traditions," so called from *kabbal*, "to

receive."... ... ... The idea of Emanation is, so to speak, the soul, the essential element of the Kabbala; it is likewise, as we have already seen, the essential character of Zoroastrism. We may therefore consider that it was through their very intimate connection with Persia that the Jews imbibed that idea.—pp. 32-33.

From a hint dropped by his panegyrist it would almost appear that the Emperor (Akbar) had imbibed some slight tinge of Zoroastrian doctrine, for he remarks his particular veneration for the element of fire; and again the significant circumstance of his regulating his frequent daily prayers by the position of the sun in the heavens.—p. 417.

'The Gnostics and Their Remains.'—C. W. King, M.A. 1887.

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Daghde (Anquetil writes Dogdo), the mother of Zoroaster, is also said to have been of princely birth, and it is needless to observe that her life is reported to have been so spotless as to attract the favour of the Deity, who foretold to her the greatness of Zoroaster while yet in the womb, through the medium of magic dreams. Nor is it necessary to state that the birth of the Persian prophet was attended with many miraculous circumstances calculated to make the persons who saw it adopt and spread the belief in the divine mission of the newborn infant.—p. 946.

There was only one Zoroaster or Zerdusht, who lived in the time of Gushtasp and effected a great reform. ... ... Zoroaster, we are told, was a great astrologer and magician ; and it is even stated by Porphyrius that Darius was so proud of having been initiated into the mysteries of the art by Zoroaster himself, that he ordered it to be inscribed on his tomb.—p. 948.

'The English Cyclopædia.' Charles Knight (Biography.—Vol. VI.) 1858.

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Their places of worship were circles of stones, in the centre of which they kindled the sacred fire, the only symbol of their God: for they abhorred statues, as well as temples and altars ; thinking it unworthy of the majesty of the Deity to be represented by any definite form, or to be circumscribed in any determinate space. The universe was his temple, and the all pervading element of fire his only representative; whence their most solemn act of devotion was, kindling an immense fire on the top of a high mountain, and offering up in it quantities of wine, honey, oil, and all kinds of perfumes.

The Avesta is, to be sure, in many respect, an incomplete work, but it is obviously genuine.....the old Iranians, giving to the evil powers the names peculiar to the religion of their adversaries as the Jewish Pharisees, copying from them, made the Hittile

God Seth or Satan, and Baal Zebub of Ekron, their ruler of the demon tribes.

In short, however recently the Avesta may have been compiled and arranged, we think its genuineness sustained.—ftnt. p. 324.

'The Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology.'—Richard Payne Knight. 1876.

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Those who call the Parsees by the name of the fire-worshippers commit a serious crime, because, by giving such a name to persons, who offer prayers to the Holy Yazadan and who worship Ahura-Mazda, they greatly insult the very Yazadan and Ahura Mazda, and they by doing so, prove themselves to be irreligious. There does not exist a single object in the whole universe, that equals fire in its importance, and a fire-temple alone is the real temple of the Yazadan. Though God is omnipresent, He is invisible to all; in the same manner, though heat, which is the produce of fire, is omnipresent, still nobody can see it. The world's existence would be rendered impossible by the absence of heat. Hence, the sources of heat, viz., fire and the Sun are the only real representations of the power and abilities of the Yazadan.

As the existence of heat depends upon that of God, heat alone is the origin and basis of the existence and continuance of the world. So all are quite justified in praising fire and the Sun, which are the true

sources of heat. Hence praying to God with our face turned towards fire or the Sun, is like praising Him in His very court. And you Zoroastrians, by your following this world-renowned path, have been fortunate to acquire the worthy name of the Yazadan-worshippers of Ahura-Mazda. The sages in Persia from their good sense and wisdom, pay due respect to fire which is the origin of heat. It is quite proper for every pious person to do the same.

Mirzan Hussein Kullikhan, *(Persian ambassader for India).* **14th March 1886.**

L

In the case of Zoroaster, the argument for his historical existence seems even stronger, for his name is connected with historical reigns and places, and his genuine early history contains nothing supernatural or improbable. He is represented as simply a deep thinker and powerful preacher, like Luther, who gave new form and expression to the vague religious and philosophical ideas of his age and nation, reformed its superstitions and abuses, and concerted the leading minds of his day, including the monarch, by the earnestness and eloquence of his discourses. At any rate, for my purpose I shall assume his personality, for my object is not to write a critical essay on the origin and development of the Zoroastrian re-

ligion, but to show that in its fundamental ideas and essential spirit it approximates wonderfully to those of the most advanced modern thought, and gives the outline of a creed which goes further than any other to meet the practical wants of the present day, and to reconcile the conflict between faith and science.—p. 198. ... ...

The doctrines of this 'excellent religion' are extremely simple. The leading idea is that of monotheism, but the one God has far fewer anthropomorphic attributes, and is relegated much further back into the vague and infinite, than the god of any other monotheistic religion.—p. 201.

It is evident that this simple and sublime religion is one to which, by whatever name we may call it, the best modern thought is fast approximating. Men of science like Huxley, philosophers like Herbert Spencer, poets like Tennyson, might all subscribe to it; and even enlightened Christian divines, like Dr. Temple, are not very far from it when they admit the idea of a Creator behind the atoms and energies, whose original impress given in the form of laws of nature, was so perfect as to require no secondary interference.

The religion of Zoroaster has, however, this great advantage in the existing conditions of modern thought, that it is not dragged down by such a dead

weight of traditional dogmas and miracles as still hangs upon the shirts of Christianity.

The code of morality enjoined by the Zoroastrian religion is as pure as its theory is perfect.–pp. 203-205.

The affinity between Zoroastrianism and art is easily explained when we consider that in one respect it has a manifest advantage over most Christian forms of religion.

In view of the approximation between the Zoroastrian religion and the forms of modern thought it is interesting to note how the former works among its adherents in actual practice. For, after all, the practical side of a religion is more important than its speculative or philosophical theories. ... ...

Tried by this test, Zoroastrianism has made good its claim to be called the 'excellent religion.'—pp. 212-214.

In this respect, however, what I have called the Zoroastrian theory of religion affords great advantages. It connects religion directly with all that is good and beautiful, not only in the higher realms of speculation and of emotion, but in the ordinary affairs of daily life. To feel the truth of what is true, the beauty of what is beautiful, is of itself a silent prayer or act of worship to the spirit of Light; to make honest, earnest, effort to attain this feeling, is an offering or act of homage. Clean-

liness of mind and body, order and propriety in conduct, civility in intercourse, and all the homely virtues of every day life, thus acquire a higher significance, and any wilful and persistent disregard of them becomes an act of mutiny against the Power whom we have elected to serve. ... ... The identification of moral and physical evil, which is one of the most essential and peculiar tenets of the Zoroastrian creed, is fast becoming a leading idea in modern civilization. Our most earnest philanthropists and zealous workers in the fields of sin and misery in crowded cities are coming, more and more every day, to the conviction that an improvement in the physical conditions of life is the first indispensable condition of moral and religious progress. ... ... To the Zoroastrian, prayer assumes the form of a recognition of all that is pure, sublime, and beautiful in the surrounding universe.—pp. 223-225.

'A Modern Zoroastrian.'—Samuel Laing. 1895.

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Venerate fire as a divinity.—This expression must not be understood in too rigorous a sense. Fire was certainly regarded by the Persians as something sacred, and perhaps they might render it some kind of religious worship, which in its origin referred only to the deity of which this element was an emblem.—

Larcher.

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The Zendavesta of the Persians,..... is reckoned among scholars as being the greatest and most learned of the sacred writings.—p. 81.

'Everybody's Scrap Book of Curious Facts.'—Don Lemon. 1890.

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Magi—a religious sect among the eastern nations of the world, and particularly in Persia. They had great influence in the political as well as religious affairs of the state, and a monarch seldom ascended the throne without their previous approbation. Zoroaster was founder of their sect. They paid particular homage to fire.—p. 378.

They (the Persians) paid the greatest veneration to the sun, the moon, and the stars,..... but the supreme deity was never represented by statues among them.—p. 507.

According to Justin, he (Zoroaster) first invented magic, or the doctrines of the magi, and rendered himself known by his deep and acute researches in philosophy, the origin of the world, and the study of astronomy. He was respected by his subjects and contemporaries for his abilities as a monarch, a lawgiver, and a philosopher. ... ...

Lempriere's Classical Dictionary. 1861.

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The religion of Zarathustra (Zoroaster) is the only one among the learned religions of the ancient world, which refers the creation to the voluntary act of a personal God, distinct from primordial matter.

... ... We find a more detailed history of the origin of the human species in the book entitled *Bundehesh*, dedicated to the exposition of a complete cosmogony. This book is written in the Pahlevian tongue, and not in Zend, the language of Zoroaster's works; and the edition which we possess is posterior to the conquest of Persia by the Mussulmans. In spite of its recent date, being the work of Mazdæans, clinging with obstinate fidelity to their religion, and repelling every foreign influence, it contains traditions whose ancient and clearly indigenous character has been vouched for by competent scholars like Windischmann, Spiegel and Canon de Harlez. Criticism accepts this as an authentic source of information in regard to that portion of the records of Zoroastrianism which does not naturally find a place in the liturgic writings, sole remains of the ancient sacred literature of Irân, which have been preserved through the lapse of ages.—pp. 59-60.

The Zoroastrian Mazdæism (Magism) like wise admits a theory of the four ages, which we find elucidated in the *Bundehesh*, but in a form more nearly related to Hesiod's than to the Indian exposition, and

devoid of the spirit of dreary fatalism which distinguishes the latter.—pp. 68-69

The conception of the sin of the first authors of humanity, the heritage of which weighs unceasingly upon their descendants, is also a fundamental idea of the Mazdæian (magian) books.—p. 76.

Mazdæism is the only religion in the symbolism of which the serpent never appears, except as an evil agent, for even in the Bible its significance is sometimes good.—p. 109.

'The Beginnings of History.' Francois Lenormant. 1892.

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To the ancient world Zoroastrianism was known by the name of "Mazdasnah," the doctrine of "universal knowledge." It was revealed by the "pure spirit" called also the "Excellent Word," pure, efficacious—"The word that Zoroaster has conveyed to men," which is the "Good Law."—p. 70.

There is, however, internal evidence in the language and religion which he reformed that he lived at a very early age, and there are many traces of his great antiquity in the Zend Avesta itself. First, that he stands at the head of the extensive Zend literature, which must have required centuries for its growth, and which was already in a state of perfection when Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, was

born, from four to five hundred years before Christ; and secondly, that he is expressly called Aryana Veédgo, "the celebrated one," in the Aryan home whence the Aryans, now called Hindoos, emigrated in times immemorial. This title, Martin Haug justly observes, would not have been given him had his followers not believed him living at that early time. Under no circumstance can we assign to him a later date than the year 1,000. B. C.—p. 92.

In these fragments, rather than books, he appears to us a real man, earnest, strong, and true, just and generous in every act of his life, taking a prominent part in the history of his country and the welfare of his fellow-creatures. He called upon every man to take his part in the battle between good and evil, adding the firm assurance that good will always prevail. ... ... His ideal of home, of father and mother living together under one roof in freedom and love and unity, cemented by a supreme and unalterable bond of love and friendship. ... ... He abolished stone images, necromancy, magic, witchcraft, all of which were identified with the worship of fire. He investigated astrology, and confirmed its practices as true and elevating. He inspired the old materialistic teaching of the Firepriests with a new and more spiritual meaning. At the age of thirty he completed a new code of laws, and also the Zend-Avesta, with the

Izeshnee, a still more sacred book. He distinctly recognized, above and beyond all manifestations of sun, light or fire, a purer, higher, unconditioned Being. When moved by deepest awe he bowed his head and reverently called this Being "the Truth of the Truth, the Wisdom of the Wise, the Purity of the Pure." So also in his famous prayer of one-and-twenty words, "The world is produced, and all that is good in thought, word, and deed, because of the Truth." ... ... Such is the real doctrine of Zoroaster, while the hymns of the Zend-Avesta glow and burn with the assurance of the mystic and essential life of the soul with the spiritual essence of all pure thought. The pure heavens are like light; thought is likened to a drop of pure light, and the departing spirit has a sunbeam for its guide to conduct it to immortal light. ... ... the "Gâthâs" are very beautiful hymns and full of true religious feeling... ... ...

The ancient history of the Fire-worshippers presents no nobler picture than that of Zoroaster traversing the wilds of Persia to preach a purer doctrine to his fellow-men. Before his death he is said to have reduced the twenty-one books he had written to three immortal maxims: Pure thoughts, Pure words, Pure deeds. ... ...

What a nation does thoroughly, she does for all time. So it was with the ancient Persians: centu-

ries after the death of their great teacher they kept their faith in one God firm and inviolate amid the most crushing persecution.—pp. 94-100.

Though the Fire-worshippers believe in the resurrection, they do not hold that it is to be made in the same body; their reverence therefore follows the soul, and not the body deserted by its spiritual tenant; ... ... the towers of silence which receive the dead spoil are open to the sky, and by means of the bird of prey it re-enters almost immediately into the domain of life and health and purity.—p. 124.

'Life and Travels in India.'—Anna Harriette Leonowens. 1884.

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The Mazdians who drew up the sacred code of the Avesta, if we refer to the zend text, we find they had a most severe sexual morality. The Avestic code condemns and punishes resort to prostitutes, seduction, sexual extravagances, abortion, etc. Throughout that portion of the Avesta, which has come down to us, there is no recognition of polygamy, and the verses which mention marriage have quite a monogamic meaning.—p. 150.

'Evolution of Marriage.'—Ch. Letournean. 1891.

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It is a matter of surprise that scientific observers should have recognized the long course of development which other religions undergo, should admit that the religion of Zoroaster and Judaism are still alive, after so many centuries, and such tremendous calamities.—p. 115.

'Asiatic Studies.'—Sir Alfred C. Lyall, K.C.B., C.I.E. 1884.

M

After the conquest of Persia by the Mahomedans in the seventh century, a small remnant of the "fire-worshippers," who disdained to change their religion, went into voluntary exile.—p. 95.

This made of disposing of the dead which the Parsees have practised for countless generations, is repulsive to the sentiment of nations accustomed to bury their dead in the ground; but it is thoroughly wholesome, and clears away most effectually one of the greatest difficulties encumbering the path of sanitary reformers in great cities.—p. 306.

'A Guide to Bombay' James Mackenzie Maclean, M.P. 1897.

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God, he (Zoroaster) taught, existed from all eternity, and was like infinity of time and space. ... ... The disciple of that prophet, when

he performs his devotions in a temple, turns towards the sacred fire that burns upon its altar; and when in the open air, towards the sun, as the noblest of all lights, and that by which God sheds his divine influence over the whole earth, and perpetuates the works of his creation.—p. 194.

The general maxims taught in his great work, the Zendavesta, were moral and excellent, and well calculated to promote industry and virtue. ... ... The principal tenets of the faith he taught were pure, and sublime, and ... ... his religion inculcated the worship of one immortal and beneficent Creator.—p. 196.

Zoroaster, we are informed, was a great astrologer; and, from his knowledge of the heavenly bodies, could calculate nativities, and foretell events; and this knowledge has descended to the priesthood of his followers: but it would fill a volume to describe every stone of the structure he reared.—p. 199.

'The History of Persia'—Colonel Sir John Malcolm, K.C.B., K.L.S. Vol. I. 1815.

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A symbolism of a different character from that of Egypt and India, a kind of ante-Buddhistic Buddhism, meets us in ancient Persia.

Persian Theosophy is aspirational and intellectual striving—as can be gleaned from the Avesta

and most of the Pahlavi Scriptures. Each and every Initiate is a soldier of Light, fighting for Good against Darkness and Evil. But that the supreme Good, the Supreme knowledge, is attained by the individual becoming united with the supreme Omnipresent Being, this is taught in the "Desatir," where the Unity of Man and God is beautifully expressed.—pp. 109-110.

The Theosophist, as a true eclectic, hails with satisfaction the translations of the Zend and Pahlavi scriptures of this most interesting system of Theosophy, which well rewards the earnest student for the researches he may undertake therein.

But these studies should be carried on not only in a Theosophic but also in a true scholarly spirit, and the study of the Avesta should be preceded by an acquaintance with the Vedas.—pp. 112-113.

Zoroaster bases his law on the eternal distinction between good and evil, right and wrong; he abhorred wrong-doing, convinced that it had its origin in a spirit of Evil of awful power, with whom we should constantly do battle; but his weapons were not carnal. "Pure thoughts" expressed in "true words," and shown forth in "right actions," would result in the triumph of goodness.—p. 115.

The Jews, on returning from the Balylonian Captivity, were thoroughly imbued with Zoroastrian and Magian ideas, and their Kabbala, or secret book

of Occult Wisdom, was the offspring of the Chaldean Kabbala.—p. 117.

The Parsis face the fire as they do the sun and the sea, picturing in them to themselves the Hidden Light of Lights, source of all Life, to which they give the name of Ormazd... ... ...

No religion has profounder or deeper spiritual truths than the Parsi.—pp. 128-129.

'The Mystery of the Ages.'—Marie, Countess of Caithness, Duchess de Pomar. 1887.

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In them (The Persian Gathas) we first find the dawn of a higher and purer worship than the deification of the elements ; and to them, therefore, we must turn for those conceptions of an Almighty Creator and a future life, of which but faint traces are to be found in the Vedic Hymns.—p. 43.

It was not until the appearance of Zarathrustra Spitama that this sublime doctrine was openly and earnestly preached to the people. ... ...

In the third section of the first Gatha, Zoroaster, standing before the sacred fire, makes a speech to a meeting of his countrymen, calling upon them to forsake the worship of Devas (the Vedic gods,) and to bow only before Ahuramazdao (Ormuzd).

We can almost fancy to ourselves the scene which was thus enacted in those far-off days. The imposing

form of the prophet standing erect beside the sacred flame, and proclaiming to the people the worship of one God. A momentous occasion—the first explicit declaration of a belief in one Almighty Creative Power was then made ; the great truth spread, with electric speed, through the dense crowd of listeners, and the remotest ages have been affected by the grand speech of that father of poets and philosophers, when he so solemnly called upon the people to worship one God, and to choose that day between good and evil.—pp. 55-57.

The resurrection of the body is a genuine Zoroastrian dogma, and there is not the slightest trace of its having been borrowed from a foreign source. ... ... Zoroaster and his disciples inculcated their lessons by imaginary conversations with these archangels (Amshaspands), who were thus made to preach the principles of industry, virtue, and the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. Of all the virtues brotherly love was esteemed the most, and women received an equal place with men. ... ... We find that the religion of the reformer, as contained in the five Gathas, consisted of a belief in one all-wise Spirit, the Creator and Preserver, of a future state of rewards and punishments, of the resurrection of the body, of the existence of two antagonistic principles, of good and evil, of the duty of man to adhere to one and resist the other, and of the inculcation of indus-

try, especially in agriculture, of truth, of purity, and of justice.—pp. 60-62.

In the Behistún Inscriptions, which were carved, on the rock near Hamadan, by order of Darius, probably a thousand years after the death of the great reformer, there is still no sign of any worship of the elements, but only a worship of one Supreme Being, with occasional mention of an evil spirit.—p. 64.

After their return to their own land, having sojourned for half a century amongst Zoroastrians, one sect, at least, of the Jews—the Pharisees—began to hold the Zoroastrian doctrines, of a resurrection of the body, and of a future state of rewards and punishments. The Persian word for Heaven, *Paradise*, was also adopted by the Jews, and appears in the New Testament.

These indications of a contact between the two monotheisms of the Arya and of the Semitic races are deeply interesting; for, by this means, it is possible that the influence of that most ancient of seers and prophets, the mighty Zarathrustra Spitama may be felt even in the present age.—pp. 66-67.

The Book of Enoch, so full of allusions to a future state, to angels, and to other Zoroastrian ideas, was probably written by a Jew who had had much intercourse with learned Persians.—ftnt.—p. 67.

'A General Sketch of the History of Persia'.—Clements R. Markham, C. B., F.R.S., 1874.

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Zoroaster, a celebrated eastern philosopher. Zoroaster, or Zerdusht, was the reputed founder, but more truly reformer, of the Magian religion, and lived under the reign of Darius Hystaspes. He is said to have predicted the coming of the Messiah in plain and express words; and that the wise men of the East, who came to worship our Saviour on account of his star, were his disciples.—p. 895.

'The Biographical Treasury.'—Samuel Maunder. 1862.

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The Parsee mode of disposing of the dead is certainly very effectual, and it is impossible to say that there is any objection to it upon sanitary grounds.—

Hon. M. Melvill. 16-8-1886.

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The preserved books of Persian religion are held to be no more than the scanty ruins of an extensive literature. The Avesta consisted originally of 21 Nosks or books, and most of these were destroyed by Alexander when he invaded the East; only one Nosk was preserved entire.—p. 382.

Weighty authorities may, however, be quoted for the historical reality of Zoroaster, and what appears to us most important of all, the editor of the Gathas, in the S. B. E. vol. xxxi., departing from his collaborateur, Mr. Darmesteter, has treated these hymns,

which give an account of the founder's acts and experiences when first proclaiming the true doctrine, in such a way as to produce on the mind of the reader the strongest impression of the historical reality of the prophet and of his mission. They introduce us to a religious movement actually in progress in the poet's time, a movement in which a pure and lofty faith is struggling to establish itself against prevailing superstitions. ... ... He did not preach to men unaquainted with religion. ... . As explained by Dr. Mills, the hymns are seen to be very fully charged with meaning and with sentiment. Uncouth and inartistic in expression, and demanding an immense amount of patience and ingenuity to trace their connection of thought, they surprise the reader when once he seizes their meaning, by the depth and spirituality of their contents, and force him to acknowledge that they are a worthy document of the birth of a great religion.—pp. 384-387.

Yet Mazdeism was capable of appearing, and did appear to the foreigner, as a lofty worship of a god of light and goodness. The same impression is produced by the descriptions of the Greek writers.—p. 401.

The Vendidad is composed principally of laws and rules designed to direct the faithful in the great task of maintaining their ritual purity. The whole of life is dominated in this work by the ideas of purity and defilement; the great business of life is to

avoid impurity, and when it is involuntarily contracted to remove it in the correct manner as quickly as possible.—pp. 403-404.

The belief in the resurrection, found among the Jews after the exile, and not before it, has been maintained by many to be a loan from Persia, where the belief in future reward and punishment was a settled thing from the time of Zarathustra. ... ... Some of the figures of the Jewish spirit-world are, no doubt, due to Persia; the Ashmodeus of the book of Tobit is a Persian figure.—pp. 406-407.

'**History of Religion.**'—**Allan Menzies, D.D. 1895.**

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During the first four and a half years of my priesthood, I was one of the Vicars of the celebrated Cathedral of Cologne, the finest church in the whole world. It is dedicated to the three Wise Men, or "the Magi"... who came from the East to Jerusalem to worship the new-born child Jesus at Bethlehem. That the three Magi were priests of the Zoroastrian religion, we know from Greek writers.—p. 542.

I am very far from supposing that the Parsi fire-worship is idolatry. Whoever accuses the Parsis of that most heinous of all crimes, and is not able to prove that they believe fire or the sun to be God Himself, is certainly guilty of the most detestable sin of calumny.—p. 565.

We have before us the sanctuary of the Parsi fire-temple and the sanctuary of the Christian Church. In both we see a perpetual flame indicating the presence of God: there the Omnipresence of God the Creator, here the Sacramental presence of God the Redeemer. I am unable to express in words the deep and vehement feelings which move my heart, when I kneel in the sanctuary of my Chapel and think of the Parsi fire-temple a few yards off, in which a fire is ever burning like the flame in our Sanctuary Lamp. Here is one of the many similarities you justly said exist between the Parsi and the Christian religions. Here they do not contradict one another, but Revelation embraces Nature, and Faith elevates Reason.—p. 577.

'Select Writings of the most Rev. Dr. Leo Meurin, S. J. 1891.

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Persia has no caste. All are equal from a religious point of view. All are equally called the Pure. Each one is a priest, officiating for his own household.

Persia has no temples, no other religious ceremonies than prayer and word. No mythology; no imaginative poetry. All is true, positive, serious, and strong. Force in Holiness: Note there a precocious vigour of wisdom and good sense. Fire is no more a god but a symbol, the benevolent genius of the hearth.

The simple, and in all things humane, law Persia left–that nothing has surpassed the ever living law,

and which ever remains the path of the future—that is heroic agriculture, the courageous effort of good against evil, the life of pure light in work and justice.

Thence the morals of the man and the worker—not the idler, the Brahmin, or the monk—a morality not of abstention and dreaming, but of active, fruitful energy. It is all comprised in: Be pure to be strong. Be strong to be pure.

'La Bible de l'Humanite'.—Michelet.

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The sanctity which attached to the Gâthâs from the first was naturally calculated to awaken a keen solicitude for their preservation, and as a matter of fact we find that phonological laws have been observed in the forms in which the Gâthâs and the rest of the Avesta have come down to us, and minute distinctions have been preserved with curious fidelity. If the history of human thought is of any importance, the Avesta claims a very prominent position in that history. It not only affords one of the oldest, if not oldest, monument of Aryan speculation, but, in view of its enormous influence upon later Jewish and Christian theology, it must justly claim a decisive place in the development of religion and so even in the moulding and destiny of the human soul. We have the gravest reason to believe that the entire change from the free-thinking Sadduceeism to that orthodoxy which

now underlies the Catholic Creed was due to Parsism which moulded Judaism under the modified name of Pharisaism. So far as I can see, no thorough examination of the Jewish theology can be completed without a thorough knowledge of the Avesta in its general complexion, and in many of its particular statements. ... ... A valuable knowledge of the Avesta can now be acquired with little labour and delay, but a critical knowledge of it, which alone befits an original expositor, requires very extensive and prolonged study, and this not only consumes a good part of a lifetime, but it leads the toiler through fields of supreme interest. Here is an engaging study alone worth years, and to prepare himself for the Avesta the specialist in Zend should study hundreds of these rich and poetic hymns.

As several intelligent friends and sympathizers have also asked me what led me at first to Zoroastrianism, I may as well descend still further into personal particulars and describe an experience of very great enjoyment as well as profound satisfaction. Supplementary Introduction. xviii—xxi.

'Gâthâs,'—L. H. Mills, D.D., Hon. M.A. Oxon. 1893.

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Of the great religions of antiquity that have survived to the present time, the system which is affirmed by its followers to have been promulgated by

the famous Zoroaster is one of the most remarkable. ... ... One great excellence of the system is that it connects nothing immoral with the character or worship of God. ... ... There is no image-worship in Zoroastrianism. ... ... Nothing in the Zoroastrian ritual is more remarkable than its elaborate purifications in connection with ceremonial defilement. Among Gentile religions, Zoroastrianism ranks high in point of morality.

Of those ancient systems of religion that have come down to our times one of the most remarkable is the one which is embodied in the Zend-Avesta. ... ... It has had a very remarkable history. Most important problems are involved in its relations to Hinduism, Judaism, the Babylonian religion, the Gnostic heresies, and the great system of Manicheeism; and in the Mithraic mysteries, which were mainly of Persian origin, its influence spread extensively over the Roman empire, and even as far west as Britain.—pp. 3-5.

Ceremonial purity is with the Parsi a matter of supreme importance. Defilement is easily incurred, and hence the means of purification are earnestly prescribed in the Avesta. The glory of the Zoroastrian law is said to consist in its so fully and clearly declaring the ceremonies needful for cleansing the defiled.—p. 34.

There is no trace of asceticism in the Avesta precepts or the Parsi practice. ... ... He holds that by good eating and drinking he keeps his body in health, and so fits himself to carry on a more vigorous warfare against the demon and all his works. Certainly, the typical Parsi is at the opposite pole of thought from the pale recluse, worn to skeleton by abstinence and vigils; and when the bodily mortification is carried to still greater lengths the Zoroastrian can only trace the self-denial to the influence of the demons.

In like manner, celibacy and monasticism can never in any way be approved by Zoroastrians.

... ...

The avesta frequently mentions a threefold division of human Duty, viz, Good Thought, Good Word, and Good Deed.

It dwells earnestly on the importance of truthfulness. Mithra, the divinity of light, is especially the Guardian of Truth, and "to lie to Mithra," or prejure oneself, is a very grievous sin. Promises and contracts must be faithfully observed.

Kindness and charity to followers of the true faith are inculcated.

Theft, robbery, personal assault, and murder are all strongly reprobated. ... ... The practice of prostitution, adul-

tery, sodomy, and such crimes is strongly denounced —pp. 43-45.

The Avesta sanctions no immoral acts as a part of worship.

None of the prescribed forms of worship is marked by cruelty.

... ...

The Avesta never despairs of the future of humanity; it affirms the final victory of good over evil.

... ...

Assuredly, we have no wish to undervalue the importance of the great characteristics of Zoroastrianism that have now been mentioned; and we might point to yet other merits such as its encouragement of agriculture, its inculcation of truth in thought, word and deed, the position of respect it assigns to women, and the kindness towards, at least, Zoroastrians which it inculcates.—pp. 49-50.

'The Zend-Avesta and the Religion of the Parsi'—J. Murray Mitchell, M. A., L. L. D.

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The whole system (Parsee mode of burial) is curious, and when the climate and circumstance of India are considered, solemn and appropriate, and above all highly sanitary.

The 'Morning Post,' 3rd August 1886.

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The whole fabric of their sacred works is built upon three injunctions, termed in the Avesta, Homuté, Hookté, and Varusté,—purity of speech, purity of action, and purity of thought.

Truth is the basis of all excellence; virtue alone is happiness in this world; its path is the path of peace. Good actions are the most acceptable sacrifices to God. Industry is a guard to innocence, and a bar to temptation. Hospitality, philanthropy, and benevolence are strongly inculcated. Untruth is the worst of sins; wickedness is a garment of shame; idleness the parent of want. At the resurrection God will judge mankind; the good will be rewarded in paradise for their good actions, whilst the wicked will undergo punishment for their misdeeds in a place of torture.

Mounsey.

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That there was a Zoroaster, an ancient sage, was known long before Burnouf. ... ... The principal doctrine which Zoroaster came to preach was that we must choose between these two powers, that we must be good, and not bad.—pp. 232-233.

'The Science of Language.'—Max Muller, M.A. 1866.

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That the Avesta, or the works of Zoroaster, must have been reduced to writing at least previously to Alexander's conquest.—p. 82.

He (M. Breal) shows that the name of an evil spirit like Asmodeus, which occurs in Tobit, could be borrowed from Persia only.—p. 148.

... ... We now proceed, and we are again quite willing to admit that, even without the presence of Persian words the presence of Persian ideas might be detected by careful analysis.—p. 148.

In all the passages of the New Testament where the power of evil is spoken of as a person, we may admit the influence of Persian ideas and Persian expressions.—p. 156.

We agree with Dr. Spiegel, that Zoroaster's character resembles most closely the true Semitic notion of a prophet. He is considered worthy of personal intercourse with Ormuzd; he receives from Ormuzd every word.—p. 159.

If the battles of Marathon and Salamis had been lost, and Greece had succumbed to persia, the state religion of the empire of Cyrus, which was the worship of Ormuzd, might have become the religion of the whole civilised world.—p. 162.

Here is a religion, one of the most ancient of the world, once the state religion of the most powerful empire, driven away from its native soil, deprived of political influence, without even the prestige of a powerful or enlightened priesthood, and yet professed by a handful of exiles—men of wealth, intelligence,

and moral worth in Western India–with an unhesitating fervour such as is seldom to be found in larger religious communities.—p. 164.

The so-called Fire-worshippers certainly do not worship the fire, and they naturally object to a name which seems to place them on a level with mere idolators. ... ... The fact that the Parsis are the only Eastern people who entirely abstain from smoking is very significant.—pp.170-171.

A Parsi believes in one God, to whom he addresses his prayers. His Morality is comprised in three words—pure thoughts, pure words, pure deeds. Believing in the punishment of vice and the reward of virtue, he trusts for pardon to the mercy of God. ... ... The very compactness of the modern Parsi creed accounts for the tenacity with which the exiles of western India cling to it.—pp. 178-179.

Another fact which accounts for the attachment of the parsis to their religion is its remote antiquity and its former glory. ... ... As historical relics, these works, if critically interpreted will always retain a prominent place in the great library of the ancient world.—p. 180.

Finally, let missionaries study the sacred writings on which the faith of the Parsis is professedly founded. Let them examine the bulwarks which they mean to overthrow. They will find them less formidable from within than from without. But they will also discover

that they rest on a foundation which ought never to be touched—a faith in one God, the Creator, the Ruler, and the Judge of the world.—p. 181.

Chips from a German Workshop.—Max Muller, M. A. Vol. I. 1868.

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As the Parsis are the ruins of a people, so are their sacred books the ruins of a religion. There has been no other great belief in the world that ever left such poor and meagre monuments of its past splendour. Yet great is the value which that small book, the Avesta, and the belief of that scanty people, the Parsis, have in the eyes of the historian and theologist, as they present to us the last reflex of the ideas which prevailed in Iran during five centuries which preceded and the seven which followed the birth of Christ, a period which gave to the world the Gospels, the Talmud, and the Qur'ân. Persia, it is known, had much influence on each of the movements which produced, or proceeded from, those three books; she lent much to the first heresiarchs, much to the Rabbis, much to Mohammed. By help of the Parsi religion and the Avesta, we are enabled to go back to the very heart of that most momentous period in the history of religious thought, which saw the blending of the Aryan mind with the Semitic, and thus opened the second stage of Aryan thought.

Religious and philosophic sects, in search of new dogmas, eagerly received whatever came to them bearing the name of Zoroaster.

As his name had become the very emblem of wisdom, they would cover with it the latest inventions of their ever-deepening theosophy ... ... Throughout the middle ages nothing was known of Mazdeism but the name of its founder, who from a Magus was converted into a magician and master of the hidden sciences.

Modern scholarship ... ... came to that twofold conclusion, that, on the one hand, Parsîism was one of the elements out of which Mohammed formed his religion, and on the other hand, that the old religions of India and Persia flowed from a common source.—p. XVII.

The Zend is not derived from the Sanskrit, but ... both are derived from another and older language.—p. XXI.

That the extent of the sacred literature of Mazdeism was formerly much greater than it is now, appears not only from internal evidence, that is, from the fragmentary character of the book, but is also proved by historical evidence. In the first place, the Arab conquest proved fatal to the religious literature of the Sassanian sages, a great part of which was either destroyed by the fanaticism of the conquerors and the new converts, or lost during the long exodus of the Parsis. Thus the Pahlavi trans-

lation of the Vendidâd, which was not finished before the latter end of the Sassanian dynasty, contains not a few Zend quotations from books which are no longer in existence ; other quotations, as remarkable in their importance as in their contents, are to be found in Pahlavi and Parsi tracts, like the Nirangistân and the Aogemaidê. The Bundahis contains much matter which is not spoken of in the existing Avesta, but which is very likely to have been taken from Zend books which were still in the hands of its compiler.

The primitive Avesta, as revealed by Ormazd to Zoroaster and by Zoroaster to Vistâsp, king of Bactria, was supposed to have been composed of twenty-one Nosks or Books, the greater part of which was burnt by Iskander the Rûmi (Alexander the Great). After his death the priests of the Zoroastrian religion met together, and by collecting the various fragments that had escaped the ravages of the war and others that they knew by heart, they formed the present collection, which is a very small part of the original book, as out of the twenty-one Nosks there was only one that was preserved in its entirety, the Vendîdâd.

That he raised a new religion against the Vedic religion, and cast down into hell the gods of older days can no longer be maintained, since the gods, the ideas, and the worship of Mazdeism are shown to emanate directly from the old religion and have no-

thing more of a reaction against it than Zend has against Sanskrit.—p. LXXIX.

Mandelslo, in the seventeenth century, speaks of Parsiism as a monotheistic religion.—ftnt. p.—LXXXIII.

'The Sacred Books of the East.'—F. Max Muller. Vol. IV. 1880.

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In the fragments of the Avesta which still exist, we may trace the solid foundations of the religion, laid by philosophic bards and lawgivers of old, with many a mouldering column and massive fragment of the superstructure erected upon them by the ancient priesthood. These are the last remnants of the faith held by Cyrus, the anointed of the Lord (Isaiah XLV.–1), the righteous one (Is. XLV I.–2), or eagle (Is. XLVI.–11), whom He called from the east, and the shepherd who performed His pleasure (Is. XLIV.–28); scattered fragments of the creed professed by Darius in his inscriptions; when he attributes his successes to 'the will of Aûramazdâ;' and mouldering ruin of the comparatively pure religion of the oriental 'barbarism', which Alexander and his civilising Greek successors were unable wholly to destroy, and replace by their own idolatrous superstitions.—p. IX.

The Parsi religion has long been represented by its opponents as a dualism; and this accusation, made

in good faith by Muhammadan writers, and echoed more incautiously by Christians, has been advanced so strenuously that it has often been admitted even by Parsis themselves, as regards the mediæval form of their faith. But neither party seems to have fairly considered how any religion which admits the personality of an evil spirit, in order to account for the existence of evil, can fail to become a dualism to a certain extent. If, therefore, the term is to be used in controversy, it behoves those who use it to define the limits of objectionable dualism with great precision, so as not to include most of the religions of the world, their own among the number.

If it be necessary for a dualism that the evil spirit be omnipresent, omniscient, almighty, or eternal, then is the Parsee religion no dualism. The Bundahis distinctly asserts that the evil spirit is not omniscient and almighty (Chap. I, 16) ; that his understanding is backward (I, 3, 9), so that he was not aware of the existence of Ahûarmazd till he arose from the abyss and saw the light (I, 9) ; that he is unobservant and ignorant of the future (I, 19) till it is revealed to him by Ahûarmazd (I, 21) ; that his creatures perish at the resurrection (I, 7, 21), and he himself becomes impotent (I, 21, III, 1) and will not be (I, 3, XXX, 32). ... ... Christianity has been content to leave all its other ideas about the devil in a very hazy and uncertain form, while Zoroastrianism

has not shrunk from carrying similar ideas to their logical conclusion. If, therefore, a belief in Aharman, as the author of evil, makes the Parsee religion a dualism, it is difficult to understand why a belief in the devil, as the author of evil, does not make Christianity also a dualism. At any rate, it is evident from the Bundahis that a Christian is treading on hazardous ground when he objects to Zoroastrianism on the score of its dualism. ... ... In many cases, indeed, we have really no right to assume that an Avesta myth has descended from any such Indo-Iranian origin, as there have been ample opportunities for the infiltration of myths from other sources, yet unknown, among the many nations with which the religion of the Avesta has come in contact, both before and since the time of Zaratûst. For, notwithstanding the ingenious rhetoric of the expounders of myths, it is still as unsafe, from a scientific point of view, to disbelieve the former existence of Zaratûst as it is to doubt that of Moses, or any other practically prehistoric personage, merely because mythic tales have gathered about his name in later times, as they always do about the memory of any individual who has become famous or revered.—p. lxviii—lxxii.

'The Sacred Books of the East.'—F. Max Muller. Vol. V. 1880.

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The formula 'In the name of the merciful and compassionate God,' with which every chapter but one of the Qur'an begins, appears to have been adopted from the Persian Zoroastrian phrase, Benâm i Yezdân i ba'hsâyisgar dâdâr, 'In the name of God the merciful, the just.'—p. lxviii.

'The Sacred Books of the East.'—F. Max. Muller. Vol. VI. 1880.

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His (Mânûskihar's) writings, therefore, represent the state of Zoroastrian religion a thousand years ago; and it may be presumed, from the importance and influentialness of his position, that his representations can be implicitly relied upon. To detect any differences there may be between the tenets and religious customs he describes, and those upheld by Zoroastrians of the present times, would require all the learning and experience of a Parsi priest; but, so far as a European can judge, from these writings and his own limited knowledge of existing religious customs among the Parsis, the change has been less than in any other form of religion during the same period.—p. xiv.

'The Sacred Books of the East.'—F. Max. Muller. 1882. Vol. XVIII.

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While any student may transcribe from the works of others what might be called a translation of the

Yasna, to render that part of it, termed the Gâthâs, has been declared by a respected authority, 'the severest task in Aryan philology.' No one should think of writing with originality on the Gâthâs, or the rest of the Avesta, who has not long studied the Vedic Sanskrit, and no one should think of pronouncing ultimate opinions on the Gâthâs, who has not to a respectable degree mastered the Pahlavi commentaries; ... ... and the language of the Gâthâs requires also the study of a severe comparative philology, and that to an unusual if not unequalled, extent.—p. x–xi.

The importance of this creed, so far stated, as the dualistical creation, and, as an attempted solution, of the hardest problem of speculation, should be obvious to every enlightened eye. ... ... While mankind were delivered up to the childish terrors of a future replete with horrors visited upon them from without, the early Iranian sage announced the eternal truth that the rewards of Heaven, and the punishments of Hell, can only be from within. He gave us, we may fairly say, through the systems which he has influenced, that great doctrine of subjective recompense, which must work an essential change in the mental habits of every one who receives it. ... ... While the above facts explain to us, on the one hand, the principal deities, and the peculiar hopes and fears which inspired their worship,

they lead us also, on the other hand, to wonder the more that so subtle a theology as we have found expressed in the documents, should have arisen amid so simple a community. ... ... By way, then, of summarising the chief characteristics of his (Zoroaster's) original system, we may say that he and his companions were struggling to establish a kingdom under the Sovereign Power of God, whose first care was to relieve suffering, and shelter the honest and industrious poor. This kingdom was to be conducted according to His holy Order, or plan of salvation, to be permeated by living Piety, and with the ultimate object of bestowing both Weal and Immortality. ... ... The Gâthâs are genuine in their mass, so as I believe no scholar anywhere now questions.

For the characteristics of this great teacher, I refer to the hymns themselves, which stand alone, of their kind, in literature. Nowhere, at their period, had there been a human voice, so far as we have any evidence, which uttered thoughts like these. They are now, some of them, the great commonplaces of philosophical religion ; but till then they were unheard (*agustâ*). ... ... His mental insight is as evident from his system as his deep moral inspiration. As to his secondary characteristics, his manner of thought and expression, we find them peculiar to the last degree. He has given us writings in which every syllable seems loaded with thought, sometimes

much repeated, and to us of the present day, very familiar; but then, when he wrote, one would suppose that he intended to 'utter his dark speech.' Succinctness is carried to an unexampled extreme, while the wonderful idea that God's attributes are His messengers sent out into the human soul to ennoble and redeem, makes him at times so subtle that the latest scholars cannot tell whether he means Asha and Vohu Manah personified as Archangels, or as the thoughts and beneficent intentions of the Deity reproduced in men. ... ... In making every laudatory statement, however, I take for granted, what I fear is nevertheless far from uniformly granted, and that is, that the reader will weigh well what makes all the difference, namely, the very remote period at which we are obliged to place the Gâthâs, and the comparatively rude civilisation amid which we must suppose them to have been composed. We must set the ideas which lie before us in this framework of time and place. If we fail to do so, as a matter of course the thoughts and their expression will contain for us nothing whatever new; but as viewed in the light of relation, after long weighing the matter, I cannot refer to them in any other terms than those which I use, without becoming aware that I am recoiling through fear of exaggeration from stating what I believe to be the truth.

As to the personal sentiment of Zarathustra, we can only say that it was devoted. His word Zarazdâ-

iti gives the keynote to his purposes. We are certain that he was a man of courage. ... ... He was not reticent under misfortune, while yet endowed with rare persistence to overcome it. ... ... As to the family life of Zarathustra, we can only say that he commanded respect. ... ... In the Gâthâs all is sober and real.—p. XIX—XXVI.

As to the general benefit which has resulted from Zarathustrianism in the past, few reflections need to be added. If the mental illumination and spiritual elevation of many millions of mankind, throughout long periods of time, are of any importance, it would require strong proof to deny that Zarathustrianism has had an influence of very positive power in determining the gravest results. That men should be taught to look within rather than without, to believe that suffering and sin do not originate from the capricious power of a Deity still called 'good,' that the 'good thought, word, and deed' should be recognised as essential to all sanctity, even in the presence of a superstitious ceremonial, that a judgment should have been expected according to the deeds done in the body, and the soul consigned to a Heaven of virtue or to a Hell of vice, its recompense being pronounced by the happy or striken conscience, these can never be regarded by serious historians as matters of little moment, and if, on the contrary, they are allowed to be matters of great moment, the Zend-Avesta should be revered

and studied by all who value the records of the human race.—p. XLVI—XLVII.

He is a prophet or a divinely appointed instructor, but thoroughly human and real, so far as his situations become apparent. ... ... Their doctrines and exhortations concern an actual religious movement taking place contemporaneously with their composition; and that movement was exceptionally pure and most earnest.—p. 1.

'The Sacred Books of the East'.—F. Max Muller. Vol. XXXI. 1887.

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Whatever the difficulties may be, and they are no doubt most formidable, that prevent us from deciphering aright the words of the Zendavesta, so much is clear, that in the Bible of Zoroaster, every man is called upon to take his part in the great battle between Good and Evil which is always going on, and is assured that in the end good will prevail.—p. 169.

Fire-worshippers also had come from Nausárì in Gujràt, and proved to His Majesty (Akber) the truth of Zoroaster's doctrines. They called fire-worship 'the great worship,' and impressed the emperor so favourably, that he learned from them the religious terms and rites of the old Pàrsís, and ordered Abulfazl to make arrangements, that sacred fire should be kept

burning at Court by day and by night, according to the custom of the ancient Persian kings, in whose fire-temples it had been continually burning ; for fire was one of the manifestations of God, and 'a ray of His rays.' ... ... From the new year's day of the twenty-fifth year of his reign (988), His Majesty openly worshipped the sun and the fire by prostrations ; and the courtiers were ordered to rise, when the candles and lamps were lighted in the palace.—p. 231.

'Introduction to the Science of Religion.'—F. Max Muller, M. A. 1882.

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What applies to the religion of Moses, applies to that of Zoroaster. It is placed before us a complete system from the first, revealed by Ahuramazda, proclaimed by Zarathustra. Minute scholarship only has been able to discover some older elements in the Gâthâs, but with that exception, we find in the Avesta too but few acknowledged traces of real growth.—p. 13.

'Origin and Growth of Religion.' F. Max. Muller. 1882.

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Some writers, who evidently imagine that Zoroaster worshipped the fire instead of Ormazd, his supreme deity, and who suppose that Vesta

was originally a deity of the fire, have actually gone so far as spell Zenda Vesta as if Vesta was the name of the sacred fire of the Parsis.—p. 36.

It is important to observe that the existence of this much larger ancient sacred literature in Persia was known even to Greeks and Romans, such as Hermippos, who wrote his book 'On the Magi' while residing at Smyrna. ... ... Pliny tells us that Hermippos studied the books of Zoroaster, which were then said to comprise two millions of lines. Even so late an authority as Abu Jafir Attavari (an Arabic historian) assures us that Zoroaster's writings covered twelve hundred cowhides (parchments).—p. 38.

It does not seem to me to follow that, as M. Darmesteter suggests, the Parthian rulers had actually embraced Zoroastrianism as the state religion of their kingdom. That was reserved for the Sassanians. But it shows at all events that they valued the ancient faith of their subjects, and it is a fact that some of the Philhellenic Parthian princes had actually adopted it.—p. 40.

Zoroaster taught neither fire-worship nor dualism.—p. 180.

In the ancient Gâthâs there is no trace as yet of a personal conflict between Ormazd and Ahriman. ... ... Darius also in the cuneiform inscriptions does not yet mention Ahriman as the

opponent of Ormazd. Dr. Haug seems quite right in stating that Zarathushtra, having arrived at the idea of the unity and indivisibility of the Supreme Being, had afterwards to solve the great problem which has engaged the attention of so many wise men of antiquity and even of modern times, namely, how to reconcile the imperfections discernible in the world, the various kinds of evil, wickedness, and baseness, with the goodness and Justice of the one God. He solved this question philosophically, by the admission of two primeval causes, which, though different were united, and produced the world of material things as well as that of the spirit. This doctrine may best be studied in the thirtieth chapter of the Yasna.—pp. 183-184.

The Avestic religion is before all things an ethical religion. It is meant to make people good. It holds out rewards for the good, and punishments for the bad in this life and in the life to come.—p. 190.

You will have perceived how much of real truth there is, hidden beneath all this allegorical language of the Avesta. The language is allegorical, but no one could have used that language who was not convinced of its underlying truth, namely that the soul of the righteous will be rewarded in the next life by his own good thoughts, his own good words, and his own good deeds. The idea that these good

thoughts, words, and deeds meet him in the shape of a beautiful maiden, whom at first he does not know, till she tells him who she is, is peculiar to the Avesta. ... ... They hold that the souls of the pious are not admitted at once into Paradise, but that they have first to render an account and to suffer punishment for some defects that still cling to them. This lasts for a twelve-month, when the body is supposed to be entirely decayed, so that the soul may rise freely and remain in heaven. The body, says God, 'is taken from the earth, not from heaven, but thou, O soul, art a citizen of heaven, thou knowest its laws and thou alone shalt render an account.' This shows no doubt, clear traces of Persian influence, but at the same time an independent treatment of Persian ideas, such as we find them first in the Avesta.—pp. 199-201.

It cannot be denied that in later times Persia and even India, particularly after they had been brought under Mohammedan sway, contributed largely to the development of Sufiism and of Sufi poetry.—p. 342.

'Theosophy or Psychological Religion.'—F. Max. Muller. 1893.

N

Some travellers have blamed the Parsees for hard-hearted and even barbarous treatment of their deceased friends and relations, but a better acquaintance with the causes which lead the worshippers of the sun to do so, in obedience to the commandments inherited from their forefathers, from a period nearly as far back as that age when Iran was yet developing and gaining strength, will lead us to look with a natural tolerance on this apparently fanatical custom, and to find some justification for the peculiar actions of the Parsees.—pp. 188—189.

'Travels in the East of Nicholas II. Emperor of Russia when Cesarewitch.' Vol. I.

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The Parsis, followers of Zarthasht, or Zoroaster, adore one God only, Eternal and Almighty.

Niebuhr.

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Perhaps few more remarkable facts have been revealed by the critical examination of non-Christian systems than the highly spiritual character of the ancient creed which it is usual to call the religion of Zoroaster. Only within the last few years has the progress of Iranian studies made it possible to gain an insight into the true meaning of the text of the Avesta—popularly known as the Zend Avesta—which

is to Zoroastrianism what the Veda is to Brahmanism. The knowledge thus obtained has made it clear that contemporaneously with Judaism an unidolatrous and monotheistic form of religion, containing a high moral code and many points of resemblance to Judaism itself, was developed by at least one branch of Aryan race.

Nor does the certainty of this fact rest on the testimony of the Zoroastrian scriptures only. It is attested by numerous allusions in the writings of Greek and Latin authors. We know that the Father of history himself, writing about 450 years before the Christian era, said of the Persians that 'it is not customary among them to make idols, to build temples and erect altars; they even upbraid with folly those who do.' The reason of this Herodotus declares to be that the Persians do not believe the gods to be like men, as the Hellenes do, but that they identify the whole celestial circle with the Supreme Being. ... ... Its importance must not be measured by the number of persons in the world—at present amounting to one hundred thousand—who profess the Zoroastrian creed, but rather by its connection with the history of the ancient Persians who—inheritors of the greatness and glory of their precursors, the Assyrians and Babylonians—were the first of all the Aryan races to achieve empire, and were for a time the most conspicuous and remarkable people on the

surface of the globe, influencing by their religious and philosophical ideas, by their literature, laws, and social institutions, the intellectual development of the whole human race.

Nor, again, is the interest of the subject due so much to the independent merit of the system itself as to the nature of the doctrines which it has in common with Judaism, and through it with Christianity, and to the intimate relationship subsisting between the religion of the Avesta and that of the ancient religion of our Indian fellow subjects.

In the next place as to religion. I need scarcely repeat what has been often pointed out, that the Aryan progenitors of Iranians and Indians were naturally endowed with religious capacities of no ordinary kind.

It was at a period when the religion of the Irano-Aryans had begun to suffer from the operation of such disturbing causes, that a great prophet and reformer appeared to arrest the advance of his fellow-countrymen in the path of superstition and idolatry and to bid them fix their faith on the One Living God, Ahura, thenceforward to be known as Ahura Mazda, the Everliving and Omniscient Lord. ... ... Probably there was but one great Zoroaster, just as there was but one great Buddha.

The infant Zoroaster is described as having caused much consternation by behaving very differ-

ently from other infants, and bursting into a hearty laugh when he came into the world.—pp. 164—165.

Ahura Mazda was the creator of the universe. Matter was created by him, and neither identified with him nor an emanation from him. He was to be the sole object of worship as the sole source of life, light, goodness, wisdom, and creative power. ... ... Other doctrines to be noted are the following:—A man's only hope of salvation was to be in his own self-righteousness. He was to be rewarded hereafter not according to his belief in any particular religious dogma, but according to the perfection of his thoughts, words, and deeds; of his benevolence, his benedicence (if I may coin a new word), and his beneficence. He was gifted with free-will. He could choose his own course; he was not the helpless slave of fate or destiny. He was to be judged according to his own works. The soul that sinned was to die, and no sacrifice or substitute was to be accepted. Nor was salvation or religious merit procurable through self-mortification. ... ... He (Zoroaster) was an example of a great thinker confronted with a great moral difficulty.—pp. 168—169.

In the religion of Zoroaster, ... there is a clear recognition of the superiority and ultimate victory of good over evil. No demon is therefore propitiated by offerings as in

Hinduism. Nor is the wrath of God or demon appeased by sanguinary sacrifices. ... ... The true Zoroastrian is never guilty of the imprudence of despising his foe. He is fully alive to the subtlety and cunning of his spiritual adversaries. His whole life is spent in protecting himself against their machinations. He knows that their power of working mischief is greatly enhanced by any impurity of thought, word, or deed. He is taught that in order to be demon-proof a man must be perpetually on his guard against the slightest personal or bodily defilement. No animals ought ever to be sacrificed ; nor is there any image worship. Idolatry, such as is practised by the Hindus of the present day, is an abonimation to all true Zoroastrians. ... ... Our object in studying these ancient documents is to gain an insight into the earliest thoughts and feelings of our Aryan forefathers, to follow the gradual growth of their religious ideas, and to watch the operation of those intellectual, spiritual, and moral forces out of which our own higher civilisation and more refined culture have been slowly and laboriously developed.—pp. 175-176.

He (a Parsi) offers no homage to blocks of wood and stone, to monstrous many-headed images, grotesque symbols of good luck, or four-armed deities of fortune.—p. 501.

According to Zoroastrianism, whatever is done by human beings to assist creation is good, and helps them to heaven; whatever is done to hasten destruction is bad, and leads them to hell. ... ... The foregoing creed ... ... may help to correct the popular fallacy that the Pàrsís are fire-worshippers. Fire is to them a mere symbol of Almighty power and purity. It is their Kiblah, to which they turn when they address the supreme Being. It is on this account that the fire temple, as used by Anglicised Pàrsís, is objected to by the more orthodox, on the ground that it is suggestive of idolatry, whereas fire is never worshipped as a God. Herodotus expressly affirms that the Persians had no temples. Yet sanctuaries of some kind for guarding the sacred fire must have existed in his time, for they are referred to in the Avesta.—pp. 504—507.

It is quite true that fasting and abstinence form no part of their religion. But in fairness it must be admitted they take as much care of their own poor as of themselves. Charity is an essential part of Parsi religious duty. Not a beggar is to be found in the whole community.—p. 516.

'The Nineteenth Century.' Vol. IX. 1881.

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Some of the later passages in the *Zend* Avesta which describe the battle with the Demon of Putrefaction, and which might seem to some of us most

grotesque, were hardly superfluities, for they showed a sanitation which it would be better for us to follow rather than condemn.—p. 44.

(Consciously or unconsciously they anticipated much modern theory on this subject, and led the way in the most practical of all sciences—disinfection.—Ft. Nt.)

What is intended at present is to call attention to the now undoubted, and long since suspected, fact, that it pleased the Divine Power to reveal some of the most important articles of our Catholic creed first to the Zoroastrians, and through their literature to the Jews and ourselves.—p. 45.

The word 'Mazda' (strictly '—dâh'), meaning 'the Great Creator,' or 'the Great Wise One', is an especially well-adapted name for God, much more so than our own name for Him; and this revering title well expresses the enlightened tone of the book. If then any ancient volume could claim our attention, it would seem to be the Sacred scripture of that great Mazda-worshipper who, under the providence of God, determined the entire later history of the Jewish people. ... ... It is equally notorious that very many new ideas of various descriptions were imported from Persia into Judea; and this being the case it seems scarcely possible *a priori* that the most serious traces of Persian influence should not appear even in the writings of the New Testament... ... ... We have every reason to believe that some

of the most important features of the Pharisaic orthodoxy were, under the providence of God, taught directly or indirectly through the Persian influence, the name 'Pharisee' itself being the equivalent of 'Farsee', a later form of Parsee, and I need hardly remind the reader that the Pharisaic faith was largely the foundation of our own.—pp. 47-48.

These memorable fragments (of the Avesta) must have struck the attention of every learned scribe who heard them; and they must have been constantly repeated in greatly varied forms. They may well have helped to mould Jewish and Christian expressions.—p. 50.

The humbler but to a certain extent prior religion of the Mazda-worshippers was useful in giving point and body to many loose conceptions among the Jewish religious teachers, and in introducing many ideas which were entirely new, while as to the doctrines of Immortality and Resurrection, the most important of all, it positively determined belief.

But the greatest and by far the noblest service which it rendered was the propagation of the doctrine that virtue is chiefly its own reward, even in the great religious reckoning, and vice its own punishment.

The time is now past, let us hope for ever, when the Christian apologist recoiled from recognising the very important services which have been rendered

to the faith by peoples foreign to the Jews. And surely no one will look askance at the happy fact that not only a small nation to the west of the Jordan held to those great truths on which rest our hopes beyond the grave, but that the teeming millions of Persia also held to them in successive generations. These considerations entitle this ancient lore to our veneration and investigation. It now lies open not merely to the laborious specialist but to the intelligent student, and it is to be hoped that from the mass of human energy devoted to so much that is trivial, some effort may be spared for the study of this rich and influential monument of the past.—p. 57.

The Nineteenth Century. January 1894.

O

Since the date of my Town Hall lecture upon this topic (Z. Religion), in the year 1882, I have been, as you know, one of the warmest friends of your religion. ... ... Zoroastrianism is one of the noblest, simplest, most sublime religions in the world. If there is any religion whatsoever which deserves the love and loyalty of its adherents, yours is such a religion.

Col. H. S. Olcott. 17-11-1895.

On the 11th of March 1879, the undersigned, a Committee sent by the Theosophical Society of New York to report upon the philosophical and religious ideas of Oriental people, have enjoyed the pleasure of a visit to the Bombay Towers of Silence, and the instructive explanations of the Secretary of the Punchayet. We cheerfully state that these latter have removed whatever prejudices may have existed in our minds against the Parsee method of sepulture, and it will be a gratification to us to make these conclusions known to the several branches of our Society in America, Europe, and Asia.

Henry S. Olcott,

President of the Theosophical Society,
and United States Commission.

Edward Wimbridge, M. R.
Rosa Bates

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... ... Your religion is in agreement with the most recent discoveries of modern science, and that the freshest graduate from Elphinstone College has no cause to blush for the "ignorance" of Zoroatusht ! ... ... Your faith rests upon the rock of truth, the living rock of Occult Science upon which the initiated progenitors of mankind built every one of the religions that have since swayed the thoughts and stimulated

the aspirations of a hundred generations of worshippers.—p. 10.

'The Spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion.'—Col. Henry S. Olcott. 1882.

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The Shaikh Babu-ud-din Muhamed Amali, enchanted by the noble sentiments of Kaivan, a Zoroastrian sage, became his follower, and nobly exclaimed:—"As the splendour of the Almighty is in every place, knock thou either at the door of the kabah or the portals of the fire-temple."

'Theosophy: Its Friends and Enemies.'—Col. H. S. Olcott. 1881.

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In the rock-cut image of Zoroaster which is assumed to give perhaps, the nearest idea of a personal likeness of that splendid seer, the same idea of a glory about the head is carried out.

'Theosophy, the Scientific Basis of Religion.'—Col. H. S. Olcott. 1882.

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The faith of ancient Persia was undoubtedly distinguished by some of the finest elements of religion. If it recognised an Evil Principle in the operations of Nature, it likewise affirmed the existence of a Divine Goodness, to whom all the excellence of the world was to be ascribed. The immortality of the soul was taught by the priests of Iran. A place of

bliss for the virtuous and a place of punishment for the wicked, were included in the Persian creed; and Moham med's idea of a bridge finer than a hair, and sharper than a sword, across which the souls of the faithful are to make their way into Paradise, at the risk of toppling into the pit if their sins overbalance them, is manifestly derived from the Zendavesta. That the resurrection of the body was also part of this ancient religious system, seems to be clearly implied in certain portions of the sacred volume. But the Iranians did not simply proclaim a theology. Their religion was associated, as all noble religions are, with the highest personal virtues—with truth, purity, industry, and a devout acknowledgment of the Celestial Beneficence. It was incumbent on them to make frequent offering of prayers, praises, and thanks-givings; and some of their hymns appear to have been extremely beautiful. ... ... Water was the element which came next in estimation: and here again the rules against pollution were very strict—a strictness which was doubtless productive of excellent sanitary results.—pp. 213-214.

Ancient authors state that this obscure person (Zoroaster) was an astrologer and magician, as well as a religious reformer and prophet. Fragments of a volume attributed to him, and entitled "The Oracles of Zoroaster," are still extant. ... ... Light is the type and manifestation of the Good

Spirit, and therefore the faithful turn their faces, when worshipping, towards the sun or the altar-fire. ... ... The Zendavesta exists only in an incomplete shape, and is, in fact, a compilation from older writings which have been lost. ... ... The Zendavesta enjoined a strict observance of truth,and spoke of Ormuzd himself as the father and chief example of that virtue.

'Cassell's Illustrated Universal History.'—Edmund Ollier. 1882.

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These Towers had, as an established fact, proved quite harmless to the City, and there was no cause of complaint against their position on the score of sanitation or other similar grounds.

E. C. K. Ollivant, C. S.

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Mazdaism, the belief of the ancient Persians, is perhaps the most remarkable religion of antiquity, not only on account of the purity of its ethics, but also by reason of the striking similarities which it bears to Christianity. ... ... In one of the apocryphal gospels the statement is made that the Magi of the East who saw the star of Bethlehem came in response to an ancient prophecy of the advent of the saviour that had been made hy Zoroaster.

'The Open Court.' March, 1897.

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Though they (the Parsees) have adopted much from those whose country affords them protection against Mohammedan persecution, they still retain the religion of their Persian ancestors: whether with all its original purity, I shall not here inquire; yet certainly with so much of its excellence, as in a most remarkable degree influences their moral conduct. Every report that we heard on the spot, confirmed what different travellers have related concerning the active industry, hospitality, general philanthropy and benevolence of the Parsis; and tended to exalt that favourable opinion which I had already formed of their religion; as one, not only recommending, but actually producing virtuous habits; rendering the men who profess it honest, and the women chaste.—pp. 100-101.

Those were the ancient Persians who "erected not statues" to any vain deities; nor believed, like the Greeks, that "Gods were clothed in human forms." ... ... Dr. Hyde, an English theologian, does not hesitate in declaring the ancient Medes and Persians, to have been worshippers of the "True God;" a race of the faithful; and haters of idolatry. ... ... That learned writer last quoted, with whom I sincerely join respecting the old Persian worship; and sympathize in lamenting the infamous persecution which has caused its decay: ... ... I shall here express my firm belief that

the first Persian altars blazed in honour of God alone; as, likewise, that the present disciples of Zeratusht or Zardehesht (Zoroaster), both in India and the mother country, Irán or Persia have no other object when they render to Fire a semblance of veneration.—pp. 104-108.

It is allowed by Vossius, who most diligently investigated the subject of idolatry, that in early ages, Fire was to them but as a Symbol of God; and such it is at present among their descendants, the Parsis and Gabrs, or rather as they denominate themselves, Behdin, and Mazdiesnan.—p. 114.

'Travels in Various Countries of the East.'—Sir Wm. Ousely. Vol. I. 1815.

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* *

The Parsees own and adore one Supreme Being, to whom, as he is the original of all things, they dedicate the first day of every month in a solemn observance of his worship.

Rev. J. Ovington. 1889.

P

Were it (Zend-Avesta) but a recent compilation, as Jones asserts, how is it that the oldest rites of the Parsis, that the old inscriptions of the Persians, the accounts of the Zoroastrian religion in the classical

writers, the liturgic prayers of the Parsis, and, lastly, even their books do not reveal the pure Sanskrit, as written in the land wherein the Parsis live, but a mixed language, which is as different from the other dialects of India as French is from Italian?

'De antiquitate et affinitate linguæ samscredamicæ et germanicæ.'—Father Paulo de St. Barthelemy. 1798.

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The Persians were naturally a worshipful people. Their *maqi* were their wise men. The Asiatic rendering of the word signifies *consecrated men*, men devoted to the worship of God. Accordingly, the word magic originally signified the practice of worship, and the Magi of the East were those who devoted themselves to science and worship. ... ... The great religious chieftain of Persia, called by the Greeks Zoroaster, and by the Orientals, Zerdust, was born according to Herodotus, about the year 1250, and, according to other historic writers, full 1,400 B. C., in Aderbijan, ancient Media. ... ... During the rise, the reign and fall of the Persian kingdom, the *magi*, or media, were held in great repute, sitting often as counselors in the courts of kings.

Magic was but another name for wisdom. The magic of the Persians and Chaldeans, says the scholarly Brucker, "is not to be confounded with witchcraft, or a supposed intercourse with evil spirits

only; it consisted in the performance of certain religious ceremonies or incantations, which were supposed, through the interposition of *good demons*, to have supernatural effects." Magic and miracle, dream and vision, prophecy and angel intercourse, blending with the Persian philosophy and theology as rainbow hues, were among the prevailing religious ideas of this powerful empire. From these the later Hebrew prophets, of Old Testament memory, borrowed largely.—pp. 41-43.

The writings of the lesser Jewish prophets, booked in the Bible, are largely drawn from the symbols, wonders, night visions, and general religious literature of the older Persian Magi.

'Seers of the Ages'.—J. M. Peebles. 1869.

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Zoroaster, or Zerdusht, the founder of the religion of the Parsees. ... ... His parents were in an humble condition, although of a noble family. ... ... His having secluded himself from the society of man for a great number of years is a fact corroborated by many independent authorities.—p. 816.

The Penny Cyclopœdia. Vol. XXVII. 1843.

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The Fire-worshippers believe in one Supreme being. They pay the greatest reverence to the four elements, and especially to the element of fire, and to the sun, because they look upon them as emblems of the Supreme Being.

'A Woman's Journey round the World.'—Ida Pfeiffer. 1847.

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The main tenets of this pure form of the religion of Zoroaster consisted in the belief in the All-Good, whose habitation was the kingdom of Light... ... Fire, light, and the sun were reverenced ... ... as symbols of the Divine nature.—p. 12.

It is probable the early Persians worshipped the Deity with simple rites, and without the aid of temples and other accompaniments of religion. ... ... The ancient Persians are said to have reverenced fire as one of the elements. Zoroaster made it the leading feature of his religion, as a symbol of the Deity. ... ... There was certainly about the whole faith a philosophic simplicity, which was doubtless very attractive. ... ... Darius—this name is more familiar than Gushtasp—threw himself heart and soul into the new religion. He caused 12,000 cowhides to be tanned fine, and had the doctrines of the new faith written upon them, and then the collection was deposited in a rock-hewn chamber at Perse-

polis. This is the Zendavesta, or precepts of the founder, only a small portion of the contents of which is now known. ... ... Respecting other precepts contained in the Zendavesta, it is sufficient to say that they inculcated the purity of the Great Creator, and were well designed to inspire in the hearts of the readers high ideas of the Deity... ... The Magi were priests of the religion of Zoroaster, and had immense power and influence. Like their great predecessor (Zoroaster), they were astrologers.

The Mohammedans did not crush the Magian faith without a severe struggle, but they determined to stamp it out effectually. They not only destroyed temples, but slew the priests, and burnt all the books upon which they could lay their hands, in which were preserved the science, history, and religion of the conquered. It is owing to this latter circumstance that we know so little of ancient Persian history, literature, and science. The followers of Mohammed only saw in these works means to keep up the creed of Zoroaster, and destroyed them accordingly. ... ... Zoroaster condemned fasting and celibacy, and urgently impressed upon his followers the importance of cultivating the practice of agriculture.–pp. 124-130.

'Persia—Ancient and Modern.'—John Piggot, F.S. A., F. G. S., F. R. G. S. 1874.

* * *

The Parsees, followers of the religion of Zerdust or Zoroaster, adore one God only, eternal and Almighty.

'**A General Collection of the Best and most Interesting Voyages and Travels in All parts of the World.**'—**John Pinkerton. Vol. X.**

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The Zend also enjoins the constant maintenance of sacred fires, and fire-temples for religious worship; the distinction of clean and unclean beasts; the payment of tithes to priests who are to be of one family or tribe; a multitude of washings and purifications and a variety of rules and exhortations for the exercise of benevolence and charity.—p. 802.

'**Manners and Customs of all Nations.**'—**Rev. John Platts.**

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Pythagoras, having been conducted (to Babylon) among the Egyptian prisoners of Cambyses, was instructed by the Persian Magi, and particularly by Zoroaster, the first or principal depository of all secret and divine sciences.

Pliny.

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Pythagoras was purified by Zabratas, or Zaratas, of the stains of his former life, and learned from him

everything concerning the nature and principles of the universe.

Porphyry.

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I have used this title (fire-worshippers) in conformity with the popular English notion of Parsee worship; but the term is, I believe, quite unfounded. They do not worship either the elements or the heavenly bodies, being, in fact, pure Deists, and regarding the works of God's hand as to be reverenced only as proofs of the Divine power.

Mrs. Postans. 1843.

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Zoroaster lived at a very remote period, and that he was the founder of a pure and sublime religion based upon the eternal principles of right and wrong, good and evil, light and darkness, and that he was far in advance of any teacher of which human annals have preserved a record. ... ...

The spiritual life of the Jews was not manifested until after the Babylonian captivity ... ... The Doctrine taught by the Magi was that all life, chiefly that of man, bodily as well as spiritual, was a sacred pawn entrusted by the Creator to man for his advancement, and that it was his duty to keep the body clean and pure, and the soul free from sin.—pp. 10-12.

The sacred fire of the Parsees drawn from the sun by Zoroaster has been preserved with care throughout all their vicissitudes.

It is always kept burning in their temples, representing the essence of nature, the divine spark of immortality, the fluid pervading the whole earth—electricity—the cause of all growth, vigour, and splendour.—p. 31.

'**The Parsees:**'—**Hon. Charles D. Poston. 1877.**

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They (the Persians), abominating all images, worshipped God only by fire, Light was the truest symbol of the good God, and therefore they always worshipped him before fire as being the cause of light, and especially before the sun, as being, in their opinion, the perfectest fire, and causing the perfectest light.

Dean Prideaux.

R

Among the so-called heathen religions which still claim for their own more than one half of mankind, there is none of greater interest and importance than that of the Parsis, more generally known under the graphic but misleading name of "Fire-worshippers." It is certainly not from their numbers this

sect derive that interest and importance, for in that respect they form an almost imperceptible unit in the general sum. ... ... And the religion which these exiled descendants of the ancient Persians have preserved along with purity of race and time-honoured customs, is that of ancient Erân, the old and widely spread faith, the prophet of which, Spitâma Zarathushtra, was vaguely known and reverenced by the writers of Greek and Roman antiquity, as well as by the later scholars of Europe, under the name of Zoroaster.—pp. 1–2.

The name of Zoroaster, is mentioned by many classical authors, vaguely, it is true, and with many contradictions, but always with reverence, as one coupled with much holiness and mystery. It was, therefore, generally understood among the learned: 1st. That the Parsis must possess sacred books of great antiquity, containing and expounding the laws of one of the oldest and most remarkable religions in the world; 2nd. That it would be extremely desirable in the interests of historical and religious research to gain access to these books, and, if possible, to secure copies of them for the great European libraries.—pp. 7-8.

We know enough to warrant us in pronouncing the religion so almost miraculously preserved by a handful of followers one of the finest, wisest, loftiest the world has seen. ... It was the religion of the

race which, in the order of history, takes the lead at the point to which our studies have brought us.—p. 16.

Most of the Greek and Roman writers whose works, or fragments of them, have come down to us, speak of Zoroaster as of a wise man of the East and teacher of divine things, aud also magic, whose existence it occurred to no one to doubt.... ... ... There is a small collection of hymns called Gáthás (literally songs), written in a peculiar Eranian dialect, ... throughout this precious collection, the grand figure stands out most real, most human, appealing to the noblest, tenderest human sympathies, and making you feel sure that Zarathushtra has once been a living man, and not an empty name.—pp. 23-25.

Towards this loftiest and purest, while also simplest, of all the doctrines that the ancient world has taught, tended the evolution of the primeval Aryan Dualism of Nature, as it was effected in the Eranian spiritual consciousness, moulded and directed by the peculiar conditions of Eranian life. That this evolution did not waste itself in vague and profitless repinings and speculations, like the streams of Erân in the barren sands, but culminated in a positive faith, fruitful in works, like cloud-fed springs that are gathered to a head and flow forth, a mighty and life-giving river, into the haunts of men—this is due to the genius and preaching of Zarathustra. He laid

before his people their own thoughts in all the pure transparency of crystal waters cleared from muddiness and unwholesome admixtures in the filter of his own transcendent and searching mind. He guided their groping hands, and made them grasp the truth for which they were blindly reaching. They listened and understood, and were won, because, to use the expression of a great writer, they had in themselves the seed of the thoughts which the prophet expounded to them.—pp. 96-97.

Nothing can be more impressive or majestic than the purely fanciful scene in which the prophet and his mission are introduced to the world.—p. 100.

We have here (ch. XXX. of Yasna) the essence of Mazdeism in its sublime simplicity, its absolute purity, as it shaped itself in the mind of the founder. —p. 103.

There is no faintest trace of superstition or idolatrous worship in the reverence paid to "Ahura-Mazda's Fire," the symbol and rallying sacrament of a pure faith.—p. 107.

The Vendidâd, the only book of Avestan law preserved entire out of the mass of Avestan literature, is devoted to only one subject, but that a most important one: the means of maintaining the ideal Mazdayasnian purity and of fighting and defeating the Daèvas.

Certain it is that the Parsis contemplate it without repulsion for themselves, and claim that it (Parsee sepulture) is at all events the most perfect solution of the sanitary question—which it undoubtedly is, especially in hot, yet moist, tropical climes. As a solemn reminder of the equality of all men before the laws of nature, and an efficient preventive to the vanities of funeral pomp and posthumous distinctions, the custom is also entitled to respect.—p. 128.

Truly, few forms of worship appeal more to our imagination and our sense of reverent awe than the homage paid to this purest of symbols on the stainless mountain tops, by white-robed Athravans, raising their voice in song amid the silence of a wild and undesecrated nature.—p. 152.

Judged by all these tests and standards, the Eranian race and their religion hold a very high standing indeed; and a thorough comprehension of the latter will be of no little help in duly estimating the former's triumphant progress through the ancient world.—p. 168.

'Media.'—Zénaide A. Ragozin. 1889.

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They (Gathas) are original, the plain expression of actual personal longings, fears, hopes, and struggles; and there is no nature-worship in them, but, on the

contrary, the worship of the Creator of nature. ... ... We have become sure that they have an undefined antiquity which is quite remote.

Zoroaster worshipped the purest and most philosophical conception of the Deity that the world had ever seen. His name was "the Wise One," or "the Great Creator."

But there was one great difference between this theology and all others. Very many religions had and have plenty of devils to account for the ills of life; but Zoroastrianism alone at that time, so far as we are aware, actually formulated the idea that there was one original evil spirit. That is to say, it held that "death and all our woe" were inherent in the nature of things. ... ... The Jews came into contact with the Persian religion as we see from the Bible and its extravagant expressions with reference to Cyrus, the Lord's "anointed." That the Zoroastrian religion influenced the Jewish, goes without saying. The entire orthodox Pharisaism, together with its name, might be considered one mass of Zoroastrianism; for when Persian kings are so prominently mentioned in the Bible, the best explanation for the word Pharisee is the word Farsi, which is but another sound for Parsi, but I will say no more.—pp. 180–183.

'Religious Systems of the World. 1892.

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These are ideas which may serve for ideals to be aimed at in the every day life of the world, principles which the Zoroastrian religion, if rightly understood, seems to emphasize with no uncertain sound, a Religion which constituting it cannot fail to meet the wants of mankind in the present day as it has done in the past.

Arthur Richardson Ph. D. 31-10-1897.

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The faith of the Medes was by no means a religion of theoretic beliefs. There was much of practical ethics in the system. Human duty was clearly recognized, and its doctrines inculcated both by precept and law.

Truth in word and purity in life were regarded as the foundations of society. Piety towards the gods and industry in honest endeavour were virtues without which life was worthless. It is in evidence that the Medes were capable of sound thought on moral subjects. Every action was traced to its motives and judged accordingly. Human conduct was weighed according to the thought which produced, the word which expressed, and the deed which embodied it. One of the most beautiful aspect of the system was that which carried morality into the ordinary pursuits of life. ... ... All the people were required to devote themselves in whole or in part to the work of tillage. Ahuramazdâo expected it.

Zoroaster taught it. Piety demanded it—not only this, but a filial obedience to the will of the True God and reverence for his holy angels. ... ...

The faith of the Magi can hardly be classified with any other ever accepted and taught by men.—pp. 220-221.

Zoroaster came without supernatural claims, but his ministry was such as soon to give him the reputation of being a supernatural personage. His life was above reproach, devoted to the great work of introducing a truer and purer faith among his countrymen. His reform was in the nature of a protest against the sensuous doctrines and idolatrous ceremonial of the prevailing system.

His teachings are contained in the Zendavesta—the bible of the Iranian nations. The general effect of his work was to substitute the essence for the outer shell of religion and to elevate spirit in the place of form. Ahurmazdâo was a spirit, and they who worshiped him must do so in spirit and in truth. So taught the Prophet of Bactria.

It was among the hills of Persia that the doctrines of Zoroaster found their safest refuge. At a time when Media under Astyages was going rapidly down into the bogs of idolatry, the hardy race of Persians, still uncorrupted by luxury and by pageants appealing to the senses, sustained the simple faith with earnestness and Zeal. Monotheism was accepted. One God,

over and above nature, was believed in and worshiped. To him was ascribed such titles as the "Lord of Heaven," the "Maker of Heaven and earth." The religious idea was dominant. Even in affairs of state there was a strict and outspoken recognition of Ahura-Mazdâo as the supreme ruler of the world. The great kings prayed to him as the giver of life and victory. ... ...

Of idols properly so-called the Persians had none. The Zend-avesta everywhere denounces idolatry as contrary to true religion.—pp. 340-341.

'Cyclopædia of Universal History.'—John Clark Ridpath, L.L. D. Vol. I.

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The Zoroastrian system recognizes one God, omnipotent, invisible, without form, the creator, ruler, and preserver of the universe, and the last judge. ... ... The worship of idols, and indeed of any being except Ormuzd, is held in abomination; but a reverence for fire and the sun is inculcated, as they are emblems of the glory of the Supreme Deity. ... ... To Ormuzd as the source of all good is opposed Ahriman, the cause of evil; to worship the good spirit and hate the bad are the two fundamental articles of the Guebre and Parsee creed. Prayer, obedience, industry, honesty, hospitality, alms, deeds, chastity, and the rare eastern

virtue of truthfulness, are enjoined, and envy, hatred, quarrelling, anger, revenge, and polygamy are strictly forbidden. Fasting and celibacy are considered displeasing to Ormuzd. Vol. VIII.—pp. 545-546.

Magi, the priestly caste of the ancient Persians. ... ... Zoroaster was the reformer of Magism, which became the ... Persian religion. The wisdom of the Magi caused a secret knowledge of religion and philosophy to be ascribed to them. Vol. XI.—p. 53.

The Avesta is one of the most ancient and interesting documents remaining to us for the early history and religion of the Indo-European family. ... ... It is in great part prescriptive, a moral and ceremonial code, teaching the means of avoiding sin and impurity, or of expiating them when committed or incurred. ... ... The Parsees hold that Zoroaster's writings originally filled 21 volumes, which were in great part lost in the ruin of the Persian empire and religion after Alexander, only fragments of them being recovered and preserved by the Sassanian monarch Ardeshir—excepting the Vendidad, which had been saved entire. There is doubtless much truth in this tradition, the Avesta being clearly an assemblage of fragments of a more extended literature, and many circumstances favoring the theory of its collection into its present form during the early part of the Sassanian period. Vol. XVI.—pp. 628-629.

The so-called Jewish doctrine of faith developed itself among the Jews not until after the Babylonian captivity, when Judea was a Persian province, and is found in the later books of the Old Testament and in the Jewish writings a little older than, or contemporaneous with the books of the New Testament, as well as in the oldest portions of the Talmud. In Egypt and Persia, or properly speaking in Bactria, there was accordingly the cradle of our philosophic culture of the present day, and its development upto its present state must have required a period of time of nearly three and a half thousand years.

'**The Egyptian and the Zoroastrian Doctrines of faith.**'—**Dr. Edward Roth.**

S

The Persian Magi had also an idea of the future happy state of the good, very little different from that of Mohammed. Paradise they called Behisht, and minu, which signifies *Crystal*, where they believe the righteous shall enjoy all manner of delights, and particularly the company of the Hurâni behisht, or black-eyed nymphs of paradise, the care of whom, they say, is committed to the angel Zamiyad ; and hence Mohammed seems to have taken the first hint of his paradisiacal ladies.—pp. 78-79.

'**The Koran,**'—**George Sale.**

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By those who have not made the religions of the East a study the Parsees are called "fire-worshippers."—p. 67.

'India, Past and Present.'—James Samuelson. 1890.

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In answer to questions it was at once made plain that they (the Parsees) were no fire-worshippers, as we had been wont to regard them, from what we had learnt and been taught. ... ... A wonderful prophet whose creed was to fear God, to live a life of pure thoughts, pure words, and pure deeds, and to die in the hope of a world to come ... They (the Persians) had intercourse with the captive Jews, at Babylon, imparting to them their own ideas of immortality which Jewish religion upto this period had failed to teach them. ... ... No noxious odours come from these vaults (towers of silence) for the dead are buried before decay sets in, and as the nude bodies are laid in their proper place the vultures which are always at hand swoop down from the trees and soon devour the flesh ; and in a few days the bones are tenderly deposited in the vault. ... ... Does this method (that of the Parsees) of disposing of the dead seem barbarous and unfeeling ? Well it will not after visiting the place and witnessing burials. ... ...

the Parsees place their dead prayerfully and tenderly in the keeping of their God.

Evening Sentinel.—July 16 & 17, 1861.

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Zaradusht, on issuing forth into the abode of existence, laughed aloud at the moment of his birth, so that the women of the neighbourhood who were there assembled heard the sound of his laugh, and even his father, Purshasp

> Said to himself, he must surely be an emanation of God,
> All, with the exception of him, weep on coming into the world.
>
> —p. 218.

[The tradition of this appears to be widely spread, not only in the East but also in the West, as it is mentioned by Pliny (H. N. I, vii. c. 16), with the addition of one wonderful particular, namely, that Zartusht's brain palpitated so much as to repel the hand laid upon his head, a presage of future science. Solinus (c. 1). relates the same fact. Zoroaster is proverbially known as the first child who laughed on being born.—**Anthony Troyer.**]

Testimonies of the existence of works attributed to Zoroaster are found in Greek authors who lived before our era. It was in the sixth century B.C. that the Persian religion and philosophy became known in Europe by Hostanes, the Archimagus who accompanied Xerxes in his expedition against Greece. In the fourth century B.C., Plato, Aristotle, and Theopompus show a knowledge of Zoroaster's works. In

the third century B.C., Hermippus treats expressly of them, as containing not less than 120,000 distiches. Soon after the beginning of the Christian era, works attributed to Zoroaster are mentioned under different names by Nicolaus of Damascus, Strabo, Pausanius, Pliny, and Dion Chrysostomus. St. Clement of Alexandria, in the third century, was not unacquainted with them. Later, the Gnostics made a great use of the oriental cosmogony and psychology as derived from Zoroaster. The testimony of Eusebius establishes that, in the fourth century, there existed a collection of sacred works respecting the theology and religion of the Persians.

... ... The empress Eudokia of the fifth, and Suidas of the twelfth, century, attribute to Zoroaster several books, four of which treat of nature, one of precious stones, and five of astrology and prognostics. So much and more can be gathered from Greek and Latin works about the writings of the Persian legislator.—p. 224.

'The Dabistan.'—David Shea and Anthony Troyer. Vol. I. 1843.

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The religion of the Persians is one of the most interesting forms of belief devised by the search of a keen intellect after the truth, when the light of revelation has been obscured. Erroneous views have

long prevailed respecting it, through the confusion of two systems, originally distinct, which existed among the Medo-Persians.—p. 261.

'History of the World'—Philip Smith B.A. Vol. I. 1864.

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Fire-worship—The worship of fire as a god or as the abode or symbol of a god; often applied incorrectly to the worship of the Persians or the Parsis. ... ... They venerate the fire as a symbol of the deity and as a sacrificial element.—pp. 684-685.

'The Standard American Dictionary.'

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The invention of arts among the Chaldeans is generally ascribed to Zoroaster. The name Zoroaster, Dinon cited by Laertius interprets, á worshipper of the stars. ... ... The most considerable remains of the Chaldaic philosophy are those Oracles which go under the name of Zoroaster; some, indeed, condemn them as suppositions, and as forged by some Pseudo-Christian Greek; (perhaps, because the followers of Prodicus the Heretic, boasted that they had the secret books of Zoroaster). But thi seems less probable, in regard that they lie dispersed among several authors; nor are they to be neglected, in that

they have been held in great veneration by the Platonic philosophers.

'**The History of the Philosophy of the Chaldeans.**'—**Thomas Stanley.**

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This myth of the bridge "Al Sirât" rests on tradition, and was taken from the Magians.

'**Islam and its Founder.**'—**J. W. H. Stobart, B.A. 1876.**

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His religion and philosophy are supposed to be set forth in the Zend Avesta, which seems to agree with the most refined part of the doctrines of the ancient Magi, as held long prior to the time of Herodotus. That writer says, "I speak from my own knowledge, when I say that the Persians have among them neither statues, temples, nor altars; the use of which they censure as impious and as a gross violation of reason."—p. 301.

'**Introduction to Universal History.**'—**Sir John Stoddart, Kt., L.L.D.**

T

Their temples contain no images, but only the sacred Fire.—p. 41.

The Parsees worship the sun, as the greatest visible manifestation of the Deity; and I assure you, I have felt very much inclined to do the same, when He and I were alone in the Desert.—p. 51.

'A Visit to India, China, and Japan, in the year 1853.'—Bayard Taylor. 1855.

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Our knowledge of the Zarathustrian religion is chiefly derived from the Avesta (or Zend-avesta), a collection of writings or fragments composed at different dates, the remains of a much richer literature, and from the Bundesh, a cosmogonic-theologic work, written in Pehlevi not earlier than the third century of our era, but preserving many older traditions.—p. 165.

'The History of Religion.—C. P. Tiele. Vol. VII. 1877.

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No English nobleman's garden could be better kept, and no pen could do justice to the glories of its flowering shrubs, cypresses, and palms. It seemed the very ideal, not only of a place of sacred silence, but of peaceful rest.

'The Times.'

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I would not help thinking that, however much such a system may shock our European feelings and ideas, yet our own method of interment, if regarded from a Parsi point of view, may possibly be equally revolting to Parsi sensibilities. The exposure of the decaying body to the assaults of innumerable worms may have no terrors for us, because our survivors do not see the assailants; but let it be borne in mind that neither are the Parsi survivors permitted to look at the swoop of the heaven-sent birds. Why, then, should we be surprised if they prefer the more rapid to the more lingering operation ? And which of the two systems, they may reasonably ask, is more defensible on sanitary grounds ! "

' The Times.' January 28th, 1876.

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His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles Staveley, K. C. B., accompanied by Lady Staveley and Miss Amelia Schmide, visited on Saturday morning the Towers of Silence. ... ...

After staying for full one hour the party left the Compound, expressing their satisfaction at the clean and decent appearance of the place, and the sanitary precautions adopted by the Parsee community for the disposal of their dead.

The ' Times of India,' 10th April, 1876.

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The festivals of the Parsis have in all ages been characterised by great moderation and little outward display. Prayers, religious ceremonies, and charity are the chief features of these festivals. The sublime moral principles benevolence, charity, and brotherly love, which their religion teaches, are more prominently displayed on these occasions than on others. Fasting, according to the dictates of their religion, is considered sinful. ... ...

... ... King Gustasp is said to have professed and promulgated the religion of Zoroaster. —pp. 83-84.

'The Times of India Calendar and Directory,' 1897.

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There is nothing in it (Avesta) but what befits remote ages, and a man philosophing in the infancy of the world. Such traces of a recent period as they fancy to have found in it, are either due to misunderstandings, or belong to its later portions. On the whole there is a marvellous accordance between the Zend-Avesta and the accounts of the ancients with regard to the doctrine and institutions of Zoroaster. Plutarch agrees so well with the Zend books that I think no one will deny the close resemblance of doctrines and identity of origin. Add to all this the incontrovertible argument to be drawn from the language, the antiquity of which is established by the

fact that it was necessary to translate a part of the Zend books into Pahlavi, a language which was growing obsolete as early as the time of the Sassanides. Lastly, it cannot be denied that Zoroaster left books, which were, through centuries, the ground work of the Magi religion, and which were preserved by the Magi, as shown by a series of documents from the time of Hermippus. Therefore I am unable to see why we should not trust the Magi of our days when they ascribe to Zoroaster those traditional books of their ancestors, in which nothing is found to indicate fraud or a modern hand.

'Commentatio prior observationes historico-criticas de Zoroastre ejusque scriptis et placitis exhibens.'—Tychsen. 1791.

***

The sacred books of the *Zendavesta* promised to every worthy parent, the imputed merit and reward of all the good actions of his children. ... ... The religion of the ancient Persians is of great antiquity ... ... It has been translated into French by M. Anquetil de Perron, and appears to contain ... ... some sublime truths, and excellent precepts of morality. ... ... Ormuzd is to be adored through the medium of his greatest works, the sun, moon, and stars. ... ... The morality of the *Zendavesta* is best known from its abridgment the *Sadder*, compiled about three cen-

turies ago by the modern guebres. It inculcates a chastened species of Epicurism; allowing a free indulgence of the passions, while consistent with the welfare of society. It prohibits equally intemperance and ascetic mortification. It recommends, as precepts of religion, the cultivation of the earth, the planting of fruit trees, the destruction of noxious animals, the bringing water to a barren land.—p. 39.

'Elements of General History.'—Hon. Alexander Fraser Tytler. 1862.

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The Zendavesta, therefore, in the form in which it now appears, must be considered as a work of which the basis claims a most remote antiquity. ... We find in it some excellent moral precepts.—p. 227.

'Universal History.'—Hon. Alexander Fraser Tytler, Lord Woodhouselee. Vol. I. 1834.

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A faith so simple and pure is profound and ethical enough for the most exacting moralist, as well as the most philosophic schoolman. ... ...

... ... When their theology was first devised goodness was the cardinal principle.

... ... Every act that beautified the earth, that extended the field of usefulness, that wrought the suppression of hatred and the predominance of goodness, was a conquest. ... ...

A religion like this is personal and not public, a subjective living than an instituted mode of worship. No wonder that this noble faith, so ancient that we only guess its antiquity, maintained its life through all the centuries, passing the barriers of race and creed, to permeate all the later world-religions. We find its features in them all, its name and utterances translated into their numerous dialects, yet possessing the essential flavour of this primitive origin.

... ... Every hymn chanted in the Parsi worship and every prayer is an acknowledgment of the Divine goodness and justice personified in Ahura Mazda. ... . The Sacred Law of Ahura Mazda inculcated the obligation to truth in speech and action, the superior merit of industry, and goodness transcending all. Words so divine could not be ascribed to a man speaking from his own understanding. The Erânian sage is therefore always represented as uttering only oracles given to him by the Divine Being, and the collection, of which we now possess but fragmentary remains, is named the Avesta, or Revealed Wisdom. ... ... To the creed of the Erânians was given their new reading: "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his Apostle." The symbolic allegory of the Bridge of Judgment was plagiarised from the Avesta, also that of the existence of numerous races of jins and other superhuman beings, good and evil. ... ...

We commonly write it as Zoro-Aster which would seem to denote the son or rather priest of the goddess Istar.

Ammianus Marcellinus has also given an opinion, as from the great philosopher. "Plato, that greatest authority upon famous doctrines, states that the Magian religion, known by the mystic name of *Machaagistia* is the most uncorrupted form of worship in things divine." ... ... The Sacred Writings always speak of him as possessing rare spiritual endowments, and living in intimate communion with divine natures. His utterances have been denominated Magic, but only in the sense of a Wisdom-religion. He never ceased to denounce the arts of sorcery and the incantations employed in the rites of the Dæva-worshippers.—pp. 3-9.

The Zoroastrian teachings were essentially ethical, and inculcate, with pious earnestness, veneration for the pure law. By this is denoted homage to the Supreme Being, to good spirits, the guardians and benefactors, and especially to the personal protector of worshipper. Prayer was the hearty renouncing of evil and complete harmony with the Divine mind. "To attain to prayer," says the *Yasna*, "is to attain to a perfect conscience. The good seed of prayer is virtuous deeds." ... ... Every Mazdean was required to follow a useful calling. The most meritorious was the subduing and tilling of the soil.

The man must marry, but a single wife ; and by preference she should be of kindred blood. It was impious to foul a stream of water. It was a cardinal doctrine of the Zoroastrian religion that individual worthiness is not the gain and advantage solely of the one possessing it, but an addition to the whole power and volume of goodness in the universe.... ... ... "The Jews," Maimonides declares, "derived all their knowledge about the angels from the Persians, during their captivity." We have the assurance of Dean Milman that the *Avesta* was "by no means an improbable source in which we ought to discover the origin of those traditional notions of the Jews, which were extraneous to their earlier system, and which do not appear to rest on their sacred records."—p.p. 11-13.

In another direction the Zoroastrian influence accomplished nobler results.

... ... The *Avesta* is everywhere ethical, and like ancient writings essentially religious. All philosophy takes religious veneration for its starting-point.

... ... It was held anciently to include the entire domain of knowledge. Even here, the *Avesta* was not deficient. The *Nosks* treated of religion, morals, civil government, political economy, medicine, botany, astronomy, and other sciences.

The students of the Zoroastrian lore were therefore proficient scholars. Dêmokritos of Abdera, who was educated by Persians and professed their religion, was distinguished as a physician and philosopher. He became no less advanced in later years in the Egyptian learning, which he endeavoured to show was similar to the Wisdom of the East.

... ... Pythagoras elaborated the system that bears his name. He had been instructed by the Egyptian priests; yet his doctrines were essentially Zoroastrian. His biographers declared that he learned them of the sage Zaratas at Babylon.

... ... For centuries their influence penetrated far into the Christian world. The armies of Mohammed, however, arrested its triumphal progress, and overthrew it in its own native seats. Persecution and massacres have reduced the numbers of the adherents to a few thousands, living in Kirman and Bombay. Yet the heaven of truth which it carries has sufficed to preserve it from utter extinction, and it bids fair to continue for centuries. ... ... The moral virtues, truth, chastity, industry and universal beneficence, which are found inculcated in the earliest fragments of the *Avesta*, and which were characteristic of the Persians of the age of Cyrus, are even now the peculiarities of this remarkable people. ... ... Enough, that the ethics and philosophy

of Mazdean religion have been wholesome in their influence and a potent leaven to promote the fermentation of thought. Even to our own day we know and feel it ... ... Zoroastrianism has mingled with the deepest thoughts of the centuries, purifying wherever it was present. The current from that fountain has flowed for thousands of years, fertilising as it went. Everywhere, in whatever form it has appeared, it had always the same idea foremost, the overcoming of evil with good, the triumph of right over wrong. ... ... When I read and contemplate the oracular utterances of Spitaman Zarathustra, I am impressed most vividly with their sweetness and purity, and with the familiarity full of reverence which he always exhibits in his intimate communings with the Divine Being. ... ... The Zoroastrian religion is a very exalted monotheism. It was such in its inception; it continued such all through the times when evil and persecution overshadowed its fortunes; it is such now as professed by the Ghebers and Parsis. A fire so perpetual, a light so extensive, an energy so penetrating, can proceed but from the one fountain. Zoroastrism is still a faith that inspires a people to virtue and goodness. ... ... The true Mazdean regarded it as his duty to till the soil and live in orderly society. ... ... At any rate, it seems to me that to find any sentiment or illustration

in the Avesta, that was originally Jewish or Semitic at all, would require the eye of a vulture, the lantern of Diogenes or the ken of an archangel.—pp. 15-20.

'Theosophical Siftings.'—Alexander Wilder. Vol. VII. No. 10. 1894.

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Whether our Parsee brethren will recognise in the hero of this story ("Zoroaster") a likeness of their great Master we know not; but we feel sure that few of them will find fault with the noble and dignified personage described by Mr. Crawford, nor will they, we hope, find any reason to be dissatisfied with his stately and picturesque statement of their venerable faith.—p. 211.

'The Theosophist.'—1886. Vol. VII.

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The Parsi religion has the extreme merit of standing upon three shining supports that a child can see and comprehend—Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds.—p. 184.

The Theosophist. 1888. Vol. IX.

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The religion of Zoroaster (Zarathrustra) is probably the oldest form of spiritual teaching of which we have any record.

By most accredited writers on this matter, we gather that Zoroaster was held to be a Magus or prophet, a sage who introduced sciences among the Persians, instituted the Fire-magic, founded an order of Magi among the Chaldeans, and otherwise combined in himself the offices of Prophet, teacher, and Reformer. ... ... Of writings attributed to him, we have, besides oracular verses, treatises on Agriculture and Mechanics, on Magic, Astronomy, Psychology, Dreams, &c. It would require an unusual critical faculty, not to speak of a close knowledge of the Avesta and Phelvi languages, to give a lecture upon Zoroastrianism, which should take into account only the original doctrine of Zoroaster and excise all that overgrowth which invariably accumulates upon the bed-rock of any great religion in the course of ages.—pp. 757–758.

The Chaldean teachings not only have much that is highly spiritual and uplifting in them, equal indeed to some of the finest concepts of later religious systems, but also a deep philosophy which engaged the attention of some of the deepest thinkers of the Greek schools; and a science of the soul which would even at this day repay attention and study.—p. 767.

This doctrine of the astral body appears to me to be the missing link in the hitherto inexplicable Parsee custom of exposing the dead on the top of a barren hill

(*e.g.*, Malabar Hill) or in a walled-in enclosure. Their teachers in the old, old time had discovered the phenomena of trance, and the wise custom has remained to this day though its origin has been forgotten.—p. 780.

'The Theosophist,' September 1894.

We find in Zoroastrianism even in the early books an unconscious dualism, yet this duality is founded on Absolute Monotheism.

What then are we to say of Zoroastrianism? It appears to me a very Magnificent teaching. The belief in One Eternal Being to whom all is to be ascribed. In whom we live and move and have our being; who is our Father and our Brother; nay, by the incarnation of his "Good Thought" (Vohu-Mano), our very "Self,"—the ladder on which we rise to him being the good deeds of our life. Simple, yet grand in its very simplicity—small wonder is there that the people who still hold to this ancient revelation of Divinity are known for their probity, their gentleness, and kindness of heart the world over. We, in our Western home of civilisation, may well take a lesson from this noble creed which is no stranger to our ears, though may hap it has not yet touched the chords of our hearts, for is it not the teaching of Him who was despised and rejected of men: is it not the first and last word of Paul; and is

there a human heart in which it cannot find an echo to spur the soul to a higher and nobler life?—p. 451.

'The Theosophist,' April 1895.

Very instructive is the story of the fight between Zoroaster and the Fiend. And what is it with which he eventually conquers but the Word of God in his heart? And let me impress upon my readers the ever re-iterated means of grace of the Parsee religion—"Purity—Purity in Thought, Purity in Word, Purity in Deed." This is the beginning and the end of it—this is the *summum bonum*, this the key-stone of the mighty arch of Parsee Morality. How is it to be obtained? By each and every man passing each thought, word and deed through the fire of Spirit, the true refiner. That is why Fire is taken as the symbol of Spirit, for it is that which purges away the dross and leaves the refined gold.—p. 505.

'The Theosophist,' May 1895.

Mark Twain, the veteran American humourist, who visited the Parsee Towers of Silence one Sunday afternoon, while in Bombay, entered the following remarks in the book of the Punchâyat:—"One marvels to see here a perfect system for the protection of the living from contagion derivable from the dead—I mean one marvels to see this proof that modern

science is behind the ancients in this so important matter."

'The Theosophist,' March 1896.

While studying the sacred books of the "Fire-worshippers," as they have been most erroneously styled, I have many times felt impelled to render mental homage to the magnificent system of ethics therein laid down. It is, I know, a common assertion, that ethics must necessarily be the same in all true religions, and as far as fundamentals are concerned this would seem to be so, but it is rarely that one meets with such an eminently practical whilst highly philosophical presentation of ethical truths as is afforded us in the Zoroastrian Scriptures; for not only are the ethics themselves of the highest grandeur, but the philosophic explanation given with them is so clear and unmistakable, that conviction of their essential truth must follow and fasten on the student from the very first.

Now I believe that all ethics to be of any value must be founded upon the unassailable rock of Divinity. They must bear, so to speak, "the guinea stamp" clearly and readably impressed in their substance; they must carry the image and superscription of the Divine, to pass as current coin which all can honour; and I hope to be able to show that the ethical teachings of Zoroaster, fulfil these demands to the fullest extent.—p. 402.

The triple talismanic gem which Zoroaster offers to his disciples is alike effective on the plane of airy height. It is not alone for use by those who sense the soul of things and swim the deeps of spirit, but for him who has not learned to swim and paddles near the water's brim; who lives his life in one small village, so to speak knowing nought of the life of "The Great Beyond;" he whose day begins and ends in manual toil; whose mind is bent on driving true the furrow, sowing, harvesting that he may eat and live—a blameless happy life. ... ... Zoroaster's teaching of Good—Good—Good—, otherwise purity in all respects, must necessarily demand an outward manifestation, and this we find to be the case, for just as the thought, word and act must be pure, so must the vehicles of these be kept untainted; and accordingly we have in the teachings a sanitary code which it would be difficult to improve upon, even in these days of asserted cleanliness and improved sanitation.

The teacher evidently grasped the stern facts of the modes of life before him and whilst endeavouring to raise his fellows mentally and spiritually, would not neglect their physical environment. ... ...

Now if we would train a baby intellect we do not start with metaphysics, but by means of toys and games, of simple songs and pictured forms, we seek to draw the intellect out from its hiding place by gradual and easy stages. So, Zoroaster has milk for

babes and stronger meat for those whose growth demands it. Every man, woman and child is thought to be pure; clean and wholesome within and without; and every act of purity is God's good work, however small it be. The earth man walks on, the house he inhabits, the clothes that cover him, the food he eats, the water he drinks or washes in, all are to be kept pure, and many are the laws laid down for the preservation of this sacred purity. Vowed to the Good and Pure, he must, in every act hold purity before him, thus being a helper of Ahura in the manifestation of His Goodness.

Samuel Laing states that the Parsees, who, as you are probably aware, are the modern representatives of the ancient Zoroastrians, have the lowest death-rate of any of the many races which inhabit Bombay, shewing incontestibly their greater vitality and care for human life. And when it is added that the Parsees are renowned the world over for their probity, high morality, intellectuality and benevolence, it does seem as though the body of teaching contained in the Avesta was indeed a priceless treasure.

A disciple of Zoroaster was then taught to seek only after the good, the true and the beautiful. All his life was to be attuned to these; the senses were to be kept pure by operating on things of purity, and when the man commanded with his soul it was through these three qualities that he learned to know

his God. Tradition tells of altars raised on rocky heights whence the eye might roam over a glad bright world bathed in the light of God's angel, the sun; telling the heart that all was good, and if, in after ages, men with eyes less spiritual could not see beyond the symbol, and lifted up their prayers and praises to that minister of God filled with love and simple adoration for the glorious gifts of light and life, of strength and beauty, are we ones to carp and sneer; we professing Christians who lately bent the knee to dead men's bones, or brought a pardon with a gilded shrine?

But the lowliest follower of Zoroaster knew even then, as he knows to-day, that the sun which men have given him for God, is but a symbol of Ahura, and fire is the sun's representative on earth. Thus though the Parsee may turn sunwards or to the fire upon the altar, in contemplative worship, it is only that he may by these pure symbols be enabled to understand to some slight extent the glory far beyond them.—pp. 404-406.

From the foregoing, I think you will now be in a position to form a just estimate of the ethical value of what has been called "The Excellent Religion," excellent in its simple grandeur; appealing not alone to the intellectual giant, but also to the untutored shepherd—a religion which has played

no small part in the mighty past and whose echoes still linger among us to-day. If I had the time, and you the patience to listen to me I could point to its footprints down to the ages in this or that religion or philosophy, and in every case the feet which have brought the message of "Purity-Purity," have lifted the world the better for their passage. ... ...

All this is but natural, for there is nothing in the Zoroastrian teachings which will debase, for it is alone the true, the good and the beautiful which are their highest ideals, and there are no fixed points of man's imagination, but find their ultimate only in "the One which is all."

They who saw in fire and sun the ministers of God's good will, made no image of the Imageless, and here the followers of Zoroaster stand out as an example to all ages, not less to us with our "masters of painting"—profaning the majesty of Divinity by representing "The Eternal" as a venerable man of severe countenance, seated on pillows of cloud!—can we dare to say the Parsee has ever fallen so low.—pp. 408-409.

'The Theosophist,' April 1896.

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The Mazdian religion can boast of having the soundest, the sublimest, and the most rational sys-

tem of religions. The basis of these morals rests on the free volition of man.

Rev. J. Van den Gheyn.

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They enshrine fragments of the most ancient belief of the Persians.—p. 9.

Cyrus was, we know, a zealous adherent to Zoroastrian faith in the unity of God.—p. 18.

'Persia.'—W. S. W. Vaux, M. A., F. R. S. 1884.

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Many think the rite of burial as performed by the Parsees by exposing the body on an open tower to be devoured by the vultures, is not only wanting in respect to the dead, but is a revolting and disgusting feature of their religion. I know that the European inhabitants of Bombay cordially participate in the latter feeling. For ourselves, whatever we (I and Mr. Howard Vincent, M.P.) may have thought or heard previously, after visiting and having explained to us the Tower of Silence, we came away greatly impressed with the beauty of many of the thoughts it suggested. It can hardly be believed what living significance each act has, nor what tender and solemn thoughts rest around the poetic name of the "Tower of Silence." ... ... the Towers of Silence

are always situated on some hill or eminence away from the city. No expense is spared in their construction, that they may last for centuries without the possibility of polluting the earth, or contaminating any living beings dwelling therein. ... ... The vultures (nature's scavengers) do their work much more expeditiously than millions of insects would do if dead bodies were buried in the ground. By this rapid process, putrefaction with all its concomitant evils, is most effectually prevented ... ... as will be seen in the Parsee Tower of Silence, each act, each form of ceremony shows forth some scriptural type—some moral reason, suggests some holy truth. Apart from these, there is the other important consideration of the benefit thereby obtained to the living. ... ... surely the Parsee mode of burial will commend itself to many foreseeing minds. ... ... it is in great measure owing to their true and moral religion, of which the rite of burial—the Towers of Silence—is the most beautiful feature.—p. 229.

'**The Journal of a Tour through the British Empire and America.**'—**Mrs. Howard Vincent. Vol. II.**

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All the ancients agree in stating that Zoroaster was the author and founder of magism and magic, that is to say, of the philosophical sect of the magi.

'New Researches on Ancient History.'—C. F. Volney. Vol. II. 1819.

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The proper office of the Avesta, however, is to inform us respecting the moral and religious tenets and institutions of the ancient Iranian people. And its importance in virtue of this office is not to be lightly estimated. The Zoroastrian religion is one of the most prominent among the forms of belief which have prevailed upon the earth, by reason both of the influence which it has exerted, and of its own intrinsic character. It was, indeed, never propagated by missionary labors beyond the limits of Iran; we know of no people not of Persian origin who accepted it voluntarily, or upon whom it was forced; but its position on the eastern border of the Semitic races allowed it to affect and modify the various religions of Semitic origin. The later Jewish faith is believed by many to exhibit evident traces of Zoroastrian doctrines, borrowed during the captivity in Babylonia; and the creeds of some Oriental Christian sects, as well as of a portion of the adherents of Islam, have derived essential features from the same source. But the influence which its position only gave it the opportunity of exercising, was assured

to it by its own exalted character. Of all the religions of Indo-European origin, of all the religions of the ancient Gentile world, it may fairly be claimed to have been the most noble and worthy of admiration, for the depth of its philosophy, the spirituality of its views and doctrines, and the purity of its morality.—pp. 190-191.

Such are the fundamental doctrines, the moral ground-work of the Iranian religion as reformed by Zoroaster; and no one can fail to see and acknowledge their noble and exalted character. ... ... That corruption and decay which has seemed to be the destiny of everything Oriental has not spared the Zoroastrian religion. Its external rites, indeed, have maintained themselves with a tenacity truly remarkable; that little community of strangers on the western Indian coast, now the only remaining adherents of a faith which was in old times professed throughout the whole vast Iranian territory, worship still with the same forms as did their forefathers, three thousand years ago.—p. 197.

'Oriental and Linguistic Studies.'—William Dwight Whitney. First Series. 1874.

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The practice (of sepulture among the Parsis) has certainly much to recommend it in a tropical country; it is cheap, cleanly, and exceedingly expeditious.

'The World,' 8th April 1885.

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On Friday, 10th November 1876, I had the pleasure of a second visit to the towers of silence. I had already expressed my opinion in a letter published in the London Times of the 28th January 1876 as to the excellent arrangements connected with the place set apart by the Parsis for the exposure of their dead. My second visit has confirmed me in my opinion that the Parsi method of disposing of dead bodies is as perfect as anything can be in a sanitary point of view. There is no spot in Bombay where the breezes appear so healthful as in the beautiful gardens which surround the towers. Nothing during all my travels throughout India, from Cashmere to Cape Comorin, has instructed me more than my two visits to the Parsi towers of silence.

Prof. Monier Williams.

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The word Magus (Chaldee Mag, and Persian Magh) signifies "a contemplator and interpreter of Divine things," and Magia, or the Magian science is described as "the cognition of the native and original charm of everything," those secret and mysterious attractions which are hidden in the bosom of nature, and the recesses of the universe, those arcana which the Divine artificer partially expresses in his works to bring us to the whole. The great characteristic of Magism, as has been already observed, was the reli-

gion or culture of light, which was regarded under a threefold view; light, in its source or origin, as in the circle of heaven—in its manifestation or form, as in the sun—and in its activity or power, as in fire. In a word, they regarded light as the veiled presence of Divinity, accompanying the souls of men in their descent into the present world of darkness, and ever remaining with them, in order to free them and restore them to its proper sphere and theirs, and they viewed the happiness of man, and the various beautiful appearances of nature (the springing of the flowers, &c.) as the partial enfranchisement of light, and its return from its mission of love to its primal habitation and freedom in boundless space. The sun was held in special veneration, not only as the visible emblem, but in a peculiar manner, the dwelling place of the Deity; ... ... The Persians had at first no temples, but regarded the whole surrounding universe as the proper fane of the Divinity.

It was in the reign of this monarch (Darius), that an extraordinary person appeared in Media, ... He is termed by an ancient writer "the high priest of all divine mysteries," referring apparently to those mystic rites and symbols, under which he conveyed much of his instructions; and the "Mystery of light" which formed the centre-point of his creed. This mystery in which every true Magus was supposed to be initiated, recognized one infinite eter-

nal and omnipresent being, the spirit of light, which is his manifestation, and is in its own nature uncreated and sempeternal; being the true universal, which, according as it is apprehended by the moral, intellectual and sensible faculties, is respectively good wisdom, and the source of external appearances.—pp. 146-148.

The most remarkable of the institutions of Zoroaster were the caves of Mithras. These were grottos beautifully adorned with flowers and fountains of water to represent the universe. ... ... Though dark, these caves were beautifully illuminated by the emblems of all the virtues, and representations of the quarters and elements of the world, and lastly of the two-fold motions of the stars, both fixed and planetary, as well as the soul's descent through them to the world of sense, and its re-ascent through the same bright path to the intelligible world; while lovely gradations of rainbow colours like those on the walls of Ecbatana, indicated the mystery of light in its ever beneficent presence, with lapsed and erring souls struggling through darkness, and as it opens itself in the spirit or the universe, disclosing new phases of happiness and beauty.—p. 150.

The phrases "Light culture," and "Culture of light," are employed by German writers in describing

the religion of the ancient Persians, to avoid saying, "worship of light," (of which, at least in the gross sense, the Magi do not appear to have been guilty), and to express a system at once religious, scientific, and philosophical, of which light was regarded as the centre principle. The light here referred to is the superterrestrial light already described, which is represented in the sacred books of Zoroaster as "concealed in all that shines."

'A Manual of Universal History.'—J. B. Wright.

APPENDIX.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

APPENDIX

Moreover, the religion of the Persians was not that base, brutish idolatry, which had been rife at Babylon, Nineveh, and Egypt; but seems to have retained, and that in popular tradition and intelligence, some just notions of the Deity ... ... Zoroaster, the celebrated reformer of their religion, inculcated belief in the unity of the First Cause existing from eternity; ... ... But considering the condition of the ancient world intellectually and morally, in a comprehensive view as a whole, it seems right to admit, that the Persian belief was a mighty advance on Assyrian, Egyptian, and Grecian idolatry; and that its diffusion, merely through publicity and the spread of Persian power, is to be considered as a step onward, in the history of humanity, in the way of a moral preparation for the full effulgence of revealed truth.—pp. 257-259.

The descendants of the (Babylonian) captivity restored and sheltered by Persia, presented to Alexander the spectacle of a flourishing and cultivated nation, whose calm and devout bearing, as the worshippers of the unknown God, attracted his

thoughtful regard, and obtained, as it merited, his favour and protection.—pp. 263-264.

'Ancient Empires: Their Origin, Succession, and Results.'

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In those days lived Zerdusht, the Guber, who was highly accomplished in the knowledge of divine things; and having waited upon Gushtásp, the king became greatly pleased with his learning and piety, and took him into his confidence.—p. 385.

'The Sháh Náméh of Firdausi.'—James Atkinson. 1832.

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It may fairly be said that the sacred books of no other people, outside the light of the great revelation, contain a clearer grasp of the ideas, of right and wrong, or a firmer faith in the importance of the purity alike of body and soul, a more ethical conception of duty (considering the early times), or a truer, nobler, more ideal belief in the resurrection of the body, the coming of a Saviour, and of the rewards and punishments hereafter for the immortal soul, than are to be found in the scriptures of ancient Iran, illuminated by the spirit of the great teacher himself, Zoroaster. ... ... The very name Asmodeus, in the book of Tobit just referred to, was first

understood when it was discovered to be none other than the name of the awful fiend Aeshma Daeva ('Demon of Fury') in the Avesta.—pp. 420-421.

The tradition, at all events, that the original Avesta consisted of twenty-one 'Nasks' or books, rests, it seems, on good foundation. There is no special reason to doubt it.—p. 423.

Let us remember that the faith of Zoroaster lingers even until to-day; the Avesta is yet chanted in solemn tones by the white-robed priest in the temples at Bombay; the spark of the sacred fire is still cherished; most of the old rites, ceremonies and customs are preserved as of yore; and the followers of the Prophet of Ancient Iran, though they now number hardly 90,000 brethren, still forms a united community, upright, honest, thrifty, prosperous, and faithful to the teachings of their Master.—p. 431.

'The Biblical World,' June 1893.

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When, in the seventh century, the warlike followers of the Arabian prophet swept across Irán, overwhelming, in their tumultuous onslaught, an ancient dynasty and a venerable religion, a change, apparently almost unparalleled in history, was in the course of a few years brought over the land. Where for centuries the ancient hymns of the Avesta had been

chanted, and the sacred fire had burned, the cry of the *mu'ezzin* summoning the faithful to prayer rang out from minarets reared on the ruins of the temples of Ahura Mazda. The priests of Zoroaster fell by the sword; the ancient books perished in the flames; and soon none were left to represent a once mighty faith but a handful of exiles flying towards the shores of India, and a despised and persecuted remnant in solitary Yezd and remote Kirmán.—p. 123.

I wish to make two observations. Firstly, it appears to me that you must include amongst the number of the prophets many who are ordinarily excluded, as, for example, Zoroaster; for all the proofs which you have enumerated were, so far as we can learn, presented by him. Secondly, though I admit that your religion possesses these proofs in a remarkable degree (at least so far as regards the rapidity with which it spread in spite of all opposition), I cannot altogether agree that the triumph of Islám was an instance of the influence of the prophetic word only. The influence of the sword was certainly a factor in its wide diffusion. If the Arabs had not invaded Persia, slaying, plundering, and compelling, do you think that the religion of Muhammad would have displaced the religion of Zoroaster?—p. 305.

To a Zoroastrian it is lawful to drink wine and spirits, but not to exceed.—p. 375.

'A Year amongst the Persians.'—Edward J. Browne, M.A., M.B. 1893.

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Zoroaster was an eminent philosopher, ... The Greek and Arabian writers are agreed concerning the existence of the Persian Zoroaster; ... ... What the Arabian writers report concerning his having been early instructed by the jews, seems to be a fiction invented to obtain credit among the jews and Christians. —pp. 454-455.

'The General Biographical Dictionary.'—Alexander Chalmers, F.S.A. Vol. XXXII. 1817.

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The substance of the law is the command, Think purely, speak purely, and act purely. All that comes from Ormazd is pure, from Ahriman impure, and bodily purity has a like worth with moral purity. Hence the multitude and minuteness of precepts concerning bodily cleanliness. In fact the whole liturgic worship turns greatly on this point.

Zoroaster bases his law on the eternal distinction between right and wrong; Sakya—muni on the natural laws and their consequences, either good or evil. ... ... Zoroaster teaches providence, the monk of India teaches prudence; Zoroaster aims at holiness, the Buddha at merit; Zoroaster teaches and emphasizes creation, the Buddha knows nothing of creation, but only nature or law. ... ... Zoroaster recognizes all morality

as having its root within, in the eternal distinction between right and wrong motives, therefore in God ; but Sakya—muni finds it outside of the soul, in the results of good and evil action, therefore in the nature of things.—p. 182.

'Ten Great Religions.'—James Freeman Clarke.

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That a nation should have framed such ideas as this of the future world, it must needs have attained a very high degree of ethical progress. ... ... the superlative excellence of the whole conception rests in the faith that good will eventually triumph over all—even over Ahrimanes himself—and evil be entirely vanquished and annihilated. ... ... It is a mistake to suppose that the heartiness with which the Zoroastrian undertook that great battle, the clearness with which he distinguished between good and evil, and the earnestness with which he ranged himself on the side of good, helped him to this faith in its eternal victory. His was no dreamy, inactive, ascetic religion. It called on him to his utmost to promote life and happiness on earth. He was bound to work, to marry, to plant and sow, to give in charity—even in the splendid manner the actual Parsees do in India. As he was sententiously informed in his sacred book, "There are those who do not love to give. The abode which

awaits them is below." Fasting was forbidden to him as "a culpable weakening of the powers entrusted to him for good use."

Frances Power Cobbe.

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Such, certainly, were the Magi who, at the commencement of the Gospel era, startled Jerusalem with their appearance; "wise men from the East," as they are not inaptly, ... designated in our English Bible; sages, no doubt, prepared by a special providence for the momentous era that had arrived in the world's history, and informed and guided by a wisdom higher than human. ... ... The Magi appear to have been a sacerdotal body, especially addicted to the study of natural philosophy, and are more usually known by the title of "wise men."—pp. 576-577.

The Zoroastrian religion also contains important resemblances to Buddhism. Like that, it is a reformation, a revolt from the superstitions and errors of more ancient religion, but, unlike that, it recognizes in life a far deeper problem. It goes more to the root of things, and is a more truly spiritual religion. ... ... As a distinct religion Zoroastrianism is now nearly extinct, though its influence still lingers in the Christian world unrecognized. The popular conception of Satan is probably

derived, through the Jews, quite as much from the religion of Zoroaster as direct from the Bible. Such a picture as that by Retysch, of the devil playing chess with the young man for his soul ; such a picture as that by Guido, of the conflict between Michael and Satan ; such poems as Milton's "Paradise Lost" and Goethe's "Faust," could perhaps never have appeared in Christendom, had it not been for the influence of the system of Zoroaster on Jewish, and, through Jewish, on Christian thought.—p. 991.

'A Dictionary of Religious Knowledge.'—Rev. Lyman Abbott and Rev. F. J. Conant. 1875.

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All that relates to the Parsees—their religion, their customs, and their history—is of the deepest interest, an interest given by and arising from that hoariest antiquity to which they belong. A religion that is of the most ancient of the earth, and one that, although few and unimportant are its adherents to-day, at one time bade fair to be the creed of almost the whole civilised world. It was the belief of Cyrus, Darius, and Xerxes ; and, had not the advancing armies of the Persians fallen before the phalanges of the Greek, the religion of the East, the worship of one God, might have flowed over Europe and raised it from the paganism in which it grovelled. ... ...

Zerdusht, or Zoroaster, ... was one of those great leaders of men—philosophic and

enthusiastic—that only the ardent East seems powerful to produce ; one of those men whose belief in their own teaching is so intense and perfect as to convince all others of its truth. ... ... His creed was simple and comprehensive. ... ... He taught that there is a heaven and a hell, and for our actions, good or ill, shall be judged to all a meet reward of happiness or of sorrow, each one upon his merits. ... ... the simple creed, 'There is one God whom all must worship', is dear to the Parsee's heart not only for its universality, its wide-embracing scope, but from the fact that now for thousands of years, through success and through suffering, through changes of country, home, and language, his fathers have adhered to the worshipping of Ormuzd and the honouring of fire. ... ... Stone towers are built, upon whose summit are exposed the bodies of the dead to all the fowls of air, who quickly remove all flesh from off the skeleton, and the dead body, giving fresh strength to the living, is more quickly returned to its element, than by our slow and repulsive method of interment.

This manner of disposing of their dead, so repugnant to some feelings, has always had for me a curious attraction.—pp. 419-421.

Nor is there really anything more painful to the feelings of the survivors in this manner of burial than in ours. ... ... But half an hour

elapses from the time the corpse is laid reverently upon the platform till these winged assistants have ended the work that takes, may be, months with us. ... ...

The impression that the whole place gives is very far from repulsive; there is little to shock one, and much to admire in this, the Parsee mode of burial, and in the place of their sepulture.—pp. 423-424.

'The Cornhill Magazine,' October 1883.

***

The three principles of *humata*, *hukhta*, and *hvarsta*, or 'good thoughts, good words, and good deeds,' the spirit of which trilogy guides the law of Mazdayasnism.—p. 5.

'Contributions to the Study of Avestaic and Vedic Analogies.'—J. Gerson da Cunha, M. R. C. S. 1878.

***

As Zoroastrians the whole of your national and moral life centers in that small book, the Avesta. ... ... it is the best, the fullest, the clearest witness that has come to us of the life of ancient Iran, in all its aspects. The religious, moral, linguistical life of one of the greatest empires that ever was is obscurely involved in its pages and it is the task of Avesta scholars to develop it and to bring it to light. Till the discovery of the Avesta, ancient Iran had left a great name,

but nothing more : the ruins at Persepolis spoke of a great past, but did not say what it was ; the cuneiform inscriptions were mute, and the meagre accounts of the Greeks, the partial accounts of the Musulmans, were our only source of information, one scanty and unsafe indeed. The Avesta was the magic word that opened that past so closely sealed, and, when all its pages are fully understood, with that one book, we shall know more of the social and mental evolution of the old Iranians than we are ever likely to know of old India, with her four Vedas and her magnificent array of Brahmanas and Upanishads.... ... ...

Eugene Burnouf, in his memorable 'Commentaire sur le Yasna,' ... ... showed to the evidence that Zend, though closely allied to Sanscrit, is not a Hindoo dialect, but represents one of the old languages of Persia. ... ... Now, from the outside of the book let us pass to the inside, from the word to the meaning, from the language to the religion it embodies ; to that religion of Zoroaster, of which the renown had come down to us, with a halo of sanctity, through the records of the classical writers ; which had preoccupied the last thoughts of Greek philosophy ; which had troubled the dreams of many a mystic of our own middle ages, and which, in the last century, the age of scepticism and incredulity, had still such a power of fascination that, on the sight of a few Zend pages, a young man, hardly twenty, would leave his country and cross

alone through India, all ablaze with war, to go and gather the mysterious books and learn their meaning from their last interpreters. ... ...

... In the third century, we see Zoroastrism enthroned with the new dynasty of Sassan, identified with the Iranian nationality itself, and becoming the religion of the State all through Iran. After six centuries of prosperity comes the Arab invasion, the Avesta is silenced, the Atash Kadas are extinguished, and here you are, the remnants of a nation and the last witnesses of a religion that overshadowed half the world. ... ...

The Avesta is the ray of light, the column of fire, that guides the historian through the wilderness of Iranian history, illuminates the scanty documents preserved from the Achaemenian and Sassanian period, gives a meaning to the vague and obscure accounts of foreign writers, Greek, Latin, Jew, Armenian, Chinese. The Avesta is, again, the leading thread through that daedal of sects and heresies which sprung out around Ormazd and Ahriman in the beginning of the Christian era, which, under the name of Gnosticism, troubled the first centuries of the new Church ; which, under the name of Manicheism, convulsed Persia herself, and when stamped out there, went and brought a sort of counterfeit Mazdeism to all the quarters of the world, to Turkestan and China, to the coast of the Coromandel, to Bulgaria and even as far as France, to the coasts of our Province. And even the author of the

Coran, how often did he not borrow from that book which his successors wanted to tear to pieces! Though he devoted to the eternal fire the Arab minstrel who sang of Rustem and Isfendyar, yet he listened willingly to Salman the Farsi telling him of the Bridge of Hell. Most of the sects that later on tore Islam in Persia are only the old religion in disguise; they are the revolt of the old spirit, or at least its effort to adopt the new dogma to its own instincts and traditions. The Shiya sect and that doctrine of an Imam, sent from above to rule the earth from generation to generation, could be born only in the country of Jemshid and Feridun, and was a revival of the divine right of the Kayanides: even that Mahdi, who from the first century of Islam, made his appearance in the world as a herald of the last days and of the eternal reparation, was only the Mahomedan form of Him whom you call Saoshyant, but whose advent, more wisely and with a better sense of the worldly realities, you threw back iuto a more distant futurity. A great religion never dies: even when annihilated by sword and fire, it still lives on, unknown and unrecognised, in many hearts that ignore it: Persia could burn the Avesta, recite the Coran, forget the name of Zoroaster and Ormazd for the name of Mahomet and Allah, and the twenty-one words of the Honover for the eight words of the Kalima: still the inner soul of the popular

religion remained unchanged. ... ...

You see how far beyond what seems to be its natural field extends the action of your Sacred Book. No scholar who wants to know and understand the Persia of Islam can ignore that Book. ... ... The religion of Zoroaster was a religion of life, in the noblest sense of the word; it brought to its followers two things, of which the old Aryan religions in the midst of which it rose had no idea, or only a dim apperception: those two things were: moral duty and hope. A man armed with those two weapons can calmly face life and fate. ... ... the Zoroastrian faith not only gives its followers a moral rule through life, not only directs "his heart, his tongue, his hand," teaching him "good thought, good word, good deed," but it tells him that the good will prevail at last, if he does his duty; ... ... No creed could give greater dignity to life; raise man, as a man, nearer the God above, imbue him deeper with a sense that "life is earnest" and worth living. He who is sure that he will, win, if he tries, will win, and this is why, after so many storms and through so many catastrophes you are here, ahead of India, ahead in the race of progress, with the face, as of yore, turned still to the light. ... ...

It is a great title of nobility to you to be the heirs and representatives of the religion that first, in the Aryan world, promulgated the victory of God and

gave a meaning and an object to human life. And this is why that religion of yours, though you are only a few, belongs to Humanity as well as to yourselves; this is why European scholars come here to gather from your lips the tradition of your ancestors, and search eagerly for all the remains of the past.—pp. 4-13.

'Parsi—ism: Its Place in History.'—James Darmesteter. 1887.

***

Zarathushtra, it is said, preached dualism: but he did not. Ahurô Mazdaô (life) manifests itself as Spento Mainyush (increasing or outgoing life) and as Angro Mainyush (decreaing or ingoing life); the ignorants call the former the Good spirit, and the latter the Evil, though without basis—p. 147.

Instead of burning the body, expose it as the Parsees do, to the vultures, in a tower consecrated for this purpose. These birds devour it in less than an hour, and so give the Spook no chance to hang about the coffin and the grave until the maggots have devoured it.—p. 158.

Wiseacres assert that Zarathushtra taught that there are two original, independent principles, working under the Almighty, in the universe; one good and one evil; which assertion has found room n the womby, lean-witted brains of theologists; whence it has welled forth among the spiritually haveless

multitude. But Dr. Haug refutes the charge that the Zarathushtrian scriptures teach dualism ; ... ... And reason dictates that this is the truth.—p. 191.

'Swedenborg the Buddhist.'—Philangi Dasa. 1887.

***

Zoroaster, ... was a genuine prophet, and the preacher of a remarkably pure system of religion, opposed to polytheism.—p. 56.

'Addresses on Historical and Literary Subjects.'—John Ignatius von Dollinger, D. D. 1894.

***

Magians, a sect of philosophers which arose in the East at a very early period, devoting much of their attention to the study of the heavenly bodies. ... ... They held in greatest abhorrence the worship of images, which prevailed among other nations, and they held fire in the higest veneration as being the purest symbol of the Divine Being.—p. 361.

Their *Magi* or philosophers held firm by the grand fundamental article of all true religion, the unity of God. Fire they maintained to be the appropriate symbol of deity, not the deity himself. ... ... The great reformer of the ancient Persian religion was Zoroaster, who originated the

system which amid various presecutions, has continued for 2,400 years down to the present day.—pp. 649-650.

'The Faiths of the world.'—Rev. James Gardner, M. A. Vol. II.

***

Zoroaster, a celebrated Eastern philosopher or divine. .. .. the simplicity of the rites enjoined by Zoroaster was obvious to common observation. ... ... The language of the Zendavesta has from a remote age been obsolete, which indicates its great antiquity.

'A General Biographical Dictionary.'—John Gorton. Vol. III. 1847.

***

The chief doctrines of the remaining books respect future rewards and punishments, iujunctions to honour parents, and to marry early, that the chain of being be not interrupted, and prohibitions of murder, theft, and adultery.—p. 40.

'Journal of a Residence in India.'—Maria Graham. 1813.

***

I beg to state that according to my researches, carried on for many years, the Zoroastrian religion, having arisen out of a deadly struggle against the

Polytheistic and ancient times, (more than 3,000 years ago,) is to be considered as monotheistic. ... ... It is my firm opinion that in the Zendavesta no piece is younger than 400 B. C.

Dr. M. Haug. Poona, 9 September 1861.

***

Nor was it in the power of persecution, nor of civil or religious revolutions, effectually to eradicate this creed ; the adherents of which preferred exile to apostacy, and sought in the deserts of Kerman and Hindustan places of refuge and toleration for themselves and their sacred records ... ... few remains of antiquity have undergone such attentive examination as the books of the Zendavesta. This criticism has, however, turned out to their advantage : the genuineness of the principal compositions, particularly the Vendidat and Izeshre, as religious books of the ancient Persians, has been demonstrated ; and we may consider as completely ascertained all that regards the rank of each book of the Zendavesta.—p. 236.

We may therefore assume it as proved, that the reformation effected by Zoroaster took place, not in the time of Darius Hystaspis, but antecedently to the commencement of the Persian dynasty.—p. 240.

The philosophical system of Zoroaster set out with those speculations with which philosophy, in

the infancy of nations, is apt to commence her career, being impelled thereto in the most lively and powerful manner, namely, with discussions respecting the origin of evil, which in so many forms oppresses human nature.—p. 243.

Such are the principal ideas on which the system of Zoroaster turns. He did not, however, confine himself to generalities, but applied his principles to the different species of created beings.—p. 245.

Far less are we entitled to suppose that the creed of Zoroaster was at once introduced in the conquered countries as the universal religion of the state ; ... ... its author was himself neither a conqueror nor a warrior, nor did the princes who embraced it esteem it a duty to provide for its dissemination by the power of the sword. —pp. 250-251.

'Historical Researches.'—A. H. L. Heeren. Vol. I. 1854.

***

Zoroaster and the ancient Magi, whose memories the Parsees revere and whose works they are said to preserve, never taught their disciples to consider the glorious sun itself as anything more than a creature of the Great Creator. They were to revere it as his best and fairest image, and for the numberless blessings it diffuses on the earth ; the sacred flame

was intended only as a perpetual monitor to preserve their purity ; of which this element, is so expressive a symbol. In the words of on old writer, "The Parsees are so far from confounding the subordination of the servant with the majesty of its Creator, that they not only attribute no sort of sense or reasoning to the sun or fire in any of its operations, but consider it as a purely passive, blind instrument, directed and governed by the immediate impression on it of the will of God ; but they do not even give that luminary, all-glorious as it is, more than the second rank amongst His works, reserving the first for that stupendous production, the mind of man." ... ... The morality of Zoroaster inculcates purity of word, action, and thought. To increase and multiply the human species, to add to its hapiness, and provide it abundantly with the means of subsistence, are the general duties inculcated in the sacred books of the Zend Avesta. "He," says Zoroaster, "who sows the ground with diligence, acquires a greater stock of religious merit than he could gain by 10,000 prayers." He particularly enforces an attention to veracity, a quality of virtue scarcely known to any of the Eastern nations. He enjoins his disciples to pardon injuries, to honour their parents and rulers, to respect old age, to observe general gentleness of manners and to practise universal benevolence. Fasting and celibacy are for-

bidden. Polygamy (as we might have judged from the virtue of the Parsee woman) is reprobated ... ... this interment of the flesh (of dead bodies) in the stomachs of birds of prey has been reputed an honourable and enviable distinction. —pp. 476-478.

'India: Pictorial, Descriptive, and Historical. 1854.

***

The false charges brought against the religion of these people (Ghebers) by their Mussulman tyrants is but one proof among many of the truth of this writer's (Grose's) remark, that "calumny is often added to oppression, if but for the sake of justifying it."—ftnt. p. 161.

'Lalla Rookh.'—Thomas Moore. 1854.

***

A Parsee believes in one God, to whom he addresses his prayers. This God has neither face nor form, colour nor shape, nor fixed place. He is himself alone, and of such glory that we cannot praise or describe him, nor our minds comprehend him.

Prof. F. Max Muller.

It is well worth the earnest endeavour of the philosopher and the divine to discover, if possible, the spell by which this apparently effete religion

continues to command the attachment of the enlightened Parsees of India, and makes them turn a deaf ear to the allurements of the Brahmanic worship and the earnest appeals of Christian missionaries.—p. 164.

'Chips from a German Workshop.'—Prof. F. Max Muller. 1868.

The idea, once so prevalent, that their (of the Aryas of Media and Persia) religion consisted entirely of Fire-worship has long been surrendered by scholars, though it crops up again and again in popular writings. From the first acquaintance with the original texts of their sacred writings, it became clear that Fire occupied only a subordinate place in their religious system.

If we call the religion of Zoroaster fire-worship, we must apply the same name to the religion of India, nay even to the religion of the Jews. ... ... The real object of veneration with Zoroaster and his followers was Ahura-Mazda, whom we call Ormazd.—pp. 226-227.

The Zoroastrian religion, having a decidedly moral character, recognises in this struggle between good and evil the eternal law of reward and punishment, good always begetting good and evil evil. —p. 233.

'Physical Religion.'—Prof. F. Max Muller, K. M. 1891.

***

Mohammed Ali Hozein is eminently conspicuous in the praises he bestows on some learned and amiable Magians, (the descendants and disciples of the ancient fire-worshippers) whom he occasionally met with in Yezd and other parts of Persia.—p. 37.

I have reason to believe, that notwithstanding the sharpness of the Mohammedan sword (one of the chief instruments used in propagating the doctrines of the Koran), many worshippers of the Deity, under the grand symbol Fire, at this day practise in secret the ancient rites of their religion, in various parts of Persia, amidst the recesses of great mountains, and more particularly in the vicinity of Yezd.—pp. 386-387.

"Gushtasp, the son of Cai-Lohrasp, ascended the throne at Balkh, and duly administered justice.

"In his time Zertusht professed himself a prophet; and Gushtasp approved of his religious doctrines, and caused fire-temples to be erected; and Zertusht produced a certain book called *Pazend* which he had written in letters of gold on twelve thousand skins."—*Tebkaut Nasseri.*—p. 390.

'Oriental Collections.'—Sir William Ouseley, Knt., LL.D. Vol. II. 1798.

***

The religion of the Persians was that which their own prophet or philosopher, Zoroaster, had taught them more than a thousand years before the birth of Christ. ... ...

Zoroaster was the first, we might also say the last, who endeavoured to reconcile in his creed the existence of moral and physical evil with the attributes of a beneficent Creator and Governor of the world. ... ...

The simplicity of the Persian worship is vouched for by Herodotus; indeed, it seems to have impressed all who came in contact with it. ... .

The Persians, as the worshippers of one God, and as followers of the simple and pure faith of Zoroaster, were extremely averse to the complicated and degrading superstitions which were common in all the countries around them.—pp. 130-131.

'The Popular Educator.'—Vol. III.

About the time perhaps of Moses, 1,500 B. C., there arose in the Bactrian settlement a very remarkable man—Zarathustra Spitama by name, the same whom the Greeks call Zoroaster—who remodelled and fixed the faith of his people, preached the doctrines embodied in the older parts of the Zendavesta, and made the Parsee religion very much what it is to-day. He believed in the unity of God. In ac-

counting for the prevalence of evil in the world, be assumed the existence of two principles—one good, and the other bad. ... ... Cyrus, Darius Hystaspes, and Xerxes were of the Parsee race and faith. Yet more interesting, some of the most enterprising natives of Bombay are Parsees.—p. 225.

'**The Popular Educator.**'—**Vol. VI.**

***

They (the Magi) were the sages, the philosophers, and men of learning, in Persia; ... ...Their great reputation made people come from the most distant countries to be instructed by them in philosophy and religion; and we are assured it was from them that Pythagoras borrowed the principles of that doctrine, by which he acquired so much veneration and respect among the Greeks, excepting only the tenet of transmigration, which he learned of the Egyptians, and by which he corrupted and debased the ancient doctrine of the Magi concerning the immortality of the soul.

It is generally agreed, that Zoroaster was the original author and founder of this sect; ... ... As the Magi held images in utter abhorrence, they worshipped God only under the form of fire; looking upon that, on account of its purity, brightness, activity, subtility, fecundity, and incorrupt-

ibility, as the most perfect symbol of the Deity. —p. 139.

'Ancient History.'--M Rollin. Vol. II. 1839.

***

The religion of the antient Persians is valuable for its intrinsic excellence, venerable for its high antiquity and worthy of admiration for having been preserved in uncorrupted purity for more than two thousand years. ... ... Abhorring images and idolatry, they (the Magians) worshipped God only, under the symbol of fire.—pp. 166-167.

Zoroaster, who acted in concert with Histaspes, the father of Darius, and superintendent of the Magi, has ever been celebrated as the prophet of the Persians.—p. 169.

Adoring one God, they (the Persians) believed him to be omnipresent, and held it impious and profane to represent the visible Majesty of heaven by images or statues, or to circumscribe the Lord of the universe within the boundaries of Temples. ... ... After the lapse of so many centuries, the revolutions of empire, and the fall of nations, the religion of Zoroaster is still preserved in the east in its purity ; and the modern Parses adore the same object of worship, with the same rites and ceremonies, as was done by their forefathers in the

time of Darius Histaspes. Antient and modern authors, who have made the Persians the subjects of record, have always represented these as their genuine religious tenets.—pp. 172-173.

'A View of Antient History.'—William Rutherford, D. D. Vol. I. 1793.

***

In their (of the Persians) religion, which was so eminently spiritual, the earthly fire and the earthly sacrifice were but the signs and the emblems of another devotion and of a higher power ... ... the once magnanimous nation of the Persians has sunk from that pure knowledge of truth, and those high spiritual notions of religion it once entertained, down to the anti-Christian superstition of Mahomet.—pp. 174-175.

'The Philosophy of History.'—Frederick Von Schlegel. 1846.

***

The Parsee mode of disposal of the dead, seems to me to carry out in almost perfect manner, the doctrine of your religion that dead should suffer no pollution by contact with the earth.

It would I think be an admirable way of disposal of all the dead, from sanitary reasons, and quite apart from any religions feeling... ... ... your community may feel assured that the plan

works admirably from every point of view, on its present scale of operation.

'**Hon. Mr. Justice John Scott. 30 Nov. 1886.**

***

All ancient writers agree in giving Zoroaster a very remote date.—p. 381.

The name (*Zarathrustra*) is explained as "splendour of gold," evidently denoting the purity and lustre of the religion. —ftnt. p. 381.

At the time of its collection under the Sassanids, the Zendavesta comprised 21 books (*naçkas*), of which the greater part have perished, not so much by lapse of time as by Mussulman fanaticism after the conquest of Persia in A. D. 651.—p. 383.

The doctrine of future rewards and punishments is clearly, though briefly, taught in the Zendavesta; the lost books of which probably contained further details. Here we have the original of Mohammed's famous "way, extended over the middle of Hell, which is sharper than a sword and finer than a hair, over which all must pass." In the Zendavesta, this passage is called *chinvat peretu* "the bridge of the gatherer;" and there the souls of all who died are assembled on the day following the third night from their death.—p. 391.

Bloody sacrifices were interdicted in the pure Mazdean worship.—p. 393.

'The Ancient History of the East.'—Philip Smith, B. A. 1885.

***

His (Zoroaster's) philosophy commenced and ended with the attempt to find a solution for that phenomenon which must at once engage the attention of the careful observer, the separate existenee of good and evil in the world. The simple doctrine of a Good and Evil principle, the sources of existing good and evil, seemed to embrace everything, and was therefore the cornerstone of the structure of his religious and political philosophy. ... ...

Though hardly data enough exist whereby we can make out the whole of the Zoroastrian system, there can be little doubt that the direct tendency and intention of the seer was to purify as much as possible the creed which he found existing.—pp. 101-102.

'Nineveh and Persepolis:'—W. S. W. Vaux, M. A. 1855.

***

At the time of the first Sassanians the then extant remains were collected with fairness and honesty as they were found, and digested into the

different writings which still exist and in others now lost.—p. 22.

'Zendavesta.'—N. L. Westergaard. Vol. I. 1852-1854.

***

The whole fabric of this (Zoroastrian) belief is based upon the three virtues of purity of speech, purity of action, and purity of thought. Truth is deemed the basis of all excellence, while virtue alone is happiness in this world, and its path the way of peace. Good actions are considered most acceptable sacrifices to God ; industry is deemed a guard to innocence and a bar to temptation. Hospitality, philanthropy and benevolence arestrongly inculcated, while untruth is paraded as the worst of sins, wickedness as the garment of shame, and idleness as the parent of want.—p. 291.

'Half Hours with Muhammad,'—Arthur N. Wollaston, C.I.E. 1886.

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